



* Songs of
Lake Geneva *



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SONGS OF LAKE GENEVA

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

JOHN BRAYSHAW KAYE

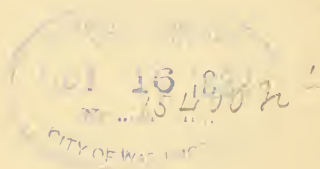
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SONGS OF LAKE GENEVA.

SWEET LAKE OF GENEVA.*

1871.



WEET Lake of Geneva,
Pure, lovely, and fair,
Moore sung of Avoca,
And Burns of "Auld Ayr."

When valleys and rivers awaken the Muse
She may not neglect to accord thee thy dues.

I have known thee from childhood, I 've studied thy
ways ;
Thy fountains, thy inlets, thy headlands and bays,
Thy shallows and depths are familiar to me
As the beads to the maid, on her conned rosary.

* Lake Geneva, Wis.

My happiest days, oh, I feel they are past !
('T is sad that earth's happiness never can last,)
They were spent on thy waters, and wandering o'er
The hills that encompass and outline thy shore.

Oft, as a young hunter, I 've wandered alone,
With nothing to cheer me save thee and my gun ;
And when weary I 've lain on the soft grassy steep,
While the voice of thy waters has lulled me to sleep.

Oh, such slumber as that ! when the soft sighing breeze
Fills the soul with calm gladness, a sweet sense of ease
Steals along every nerve, a true vision of rest.
To sleep on forever were but to be blest.

I have watched thee, dear Lake, when sore chafed by the
storm ;

When thy waters were writhing like serpents in form ;
Thou hast seemed to me then like a caldron of wrath
Boiling over with vengeance to aught in thy path.

I have seen thee again, lulled to rest by the calm,
When the sentinel hills were on guard 'gainst alarm ;

Not a breath to disturb thee, as still thy pure breast
As though Winter had chained thee in motionless rest.

At such times as these I have sat in my boat,
Like a moth on a mirror, an atom afloat ;
As silent and motionless even as thee
I have gazed in thy depths, full of wonders to me.

Beneath me, inverted, lay heaven's blue dome,
With its cirri reflected like ridges of foam ;
And a spirit within me hath whispered : " Let go,
And glide to the ethery concave below."

I have started at this, and looked up to behold
A rich, glowing sunset, in crimson and gold ;
Sol slowly withdraws from a scene which he fills,
And smiles his farewell from Fontana's green hills.

Now the dim twilight shadows are gathering fast,—
The pure spirits of those which the sunlight has cast,—
Now they melt into darkness, or all fade away,
As Night, the usurper, asserts his wide sway.

O, Lake of enchantment ! I've stood on thy shore
When the pale, mellow moonlight hath silvered thee o'er,
And the fishermen's torches have shot a faint ray,
Like the first early stars in the wake of the day.

Far along thy still waters some young spearsman's call,
Borne along in rich cadence, is echoed by all ;
Then the loud, plaintive wail of the breeze-stirring loon,
The whippoorwill's chant, and the owl's doleful tune.

Such impressions as these, when imbued in our youth,
While the heart is the home of affection and truth,
Time dims not their lustre, nor weakens their sway,
And nothing save death can e'er sweep them away.

Still fondly I love thee ! to view thee once more
Turns my memory back to the glad days of yore,
For the long years since then, full of changes to me,
But confirm the sweet sameness of beauty in thee.

Yet in time not far hence, these fair green hills of thine
Shall be famed as the cragg'd, castled banks of the Rhine;

And the seekers of pleasure shall traverse thee o'er,
And the love song and war song resound 'long thy shore.

Still again must I leave thee ! I turn to depart
While the shadows of sadness fall thick o'er my heart ;
Must it ever be thus ? to the end must I roam
Far away from the scenes which my heart declares home ?

If so it must be, oh, then still let me pray,
That some last, faithful comrade bear here my poor clay ;
That my dust may be mixed with the earth of thy shore,
And my spirit float o'er thee till time is no more.

ALONE ON THE LAKE SHORE.

July, 1871.

SWEET Lake Geneva ! nursling of the hills !
A rustic bard presumes to sing thy praise,
Fair tribute of a myriad springs and rills ;
To *thee* I dedicate these simple lays,
For *thee* I string the long-neglected lyre ;
Let Fancy's thrilling touch awake the strain,
Let Truth dictate and Memory inspire :
Time, slack thy scroll ! I am a boy again,
A hopeful voyager upon life's main.

'T is early morn ; I wander 'long thy shore,
I search for curious pebbles on the strand,
Or watch the eagles o'er thy waters soar,
Or dig for clam shells in the oozy sand.
But hark ! what joyous sounds salute my ear,
And echoing, roll along from hill to hill ?
The boist'rous laugh, the long-continued cheer,

The wild "*whoopah!*" in mimic terrors shrill,
To give the uninitiate' a chill.

My cheery, wild companions ! merry pack !
In single file they haste along the trail ;
"Helloh ! hurrah, boys ! bully ! here is Jack ?
Now, fellows, won't we have a glorious sail" ;
"Oh, no ! I guess not ! Tom, go bring a rail ;
You get another, Bill, we shall want two ;
Get nice, straight, flat ones, hearties, do not fail ;
You 'll find some split, upon the hill, 't will do,
Close by the coon-tree, where the grape-vine grew.

"George, did you bring an auger and some nails ?"
"Yes, here they are." "Good ! won't we have a craft ?
Jim, cut two bushy cedars for our sails ;
These are the logs, we 'll soon have up our raft.
Here are those other fellows with the rails ;
Now, comrades, pin and bind her fore and aft ;
Now launch her, boys ! the breeze delightful hails :
We 've poles to steer, and willing winds to waft
Our bark, not sharp of prow, but light of draft."

And now we move, and now for greater speed
Is many a wish expressed ; to swell our sail
Our scanty wardrobe must supply the need ;
'T is quickly doffed, and stretched to woo the gale.
I 'll venture that since Noah built his ark
For all his various cattle, two-and-two,
That no man ever saw another bark
So quaintly rigged ; I 'm sure a nuder crew
Ne'er put to sea since first the breezes blew.

We soon are borne out far away from shore ;
Our craft would fly as soon as make a tack :
'T was strange we had not thought of this before.
" A glorious sail," but now the getting back :
" We 've got to swim it, boys, there 's no use talking ;
A precious thing it is we all know how,
As fly we can't and have not faith for walking ;
So here goes, boys ! who takes the hindmost now ?
But hold ! we must not leave our clothes, I vow."

Each wardrobe 's gathered from the leafy mast
And snugly rolled into a tidy pack,

Behind the shoulders with a string made fast,
All ready now to take the backward track.
A cheer, a plunge, we're urging through the waves,
We're facing to'ard our native beach once more,
Our youthful limbs the bracing water laves ;
We reach at length that happy goal, the shore,
All tired, and faint, and glad the task is o'er.

Would tears restore them, then I fain would weep !
My loved companions, oh, where are they all
Who on that day climbed up the slipp'ry steep ?
Methinks e'en now I hear their ringing call :
“ Look out below ! ” With headlong furious dash
The unearthed boulder plunges down the hill,
Greeting the waters with a mighty splash ;
They, startled, leap in many an arching rill,—
A wild commotion where all late was still.

Those on the summit marked the boulder's course,
Its each revolving bound and fearful lunge,
Till near the brink, when, like a frightened horse,
Leapt high in air to take the madd'ning plunge.

Then rang the long, loud, wild exultant shout,
And rolled in echo 'long the timbered lee,
"Huzzah ! huzzah !" Then some shrill voice called out
"It's in the lake now, boys ; there let it be
Till moved by earthquake or eternity."

And then the battle on the wooded slope ;—
Our missiles, mandrakes growing on the field ;—
Twelve on each side, and each a "forlorn hope"
Would fall if need be, but would never yield.
But ere commencing 't would be only right—
So we all thought—to fix upon some plan
Of how we should conduct the coming fight.
"It should be fierce and furious as it can,
And yet, if possible, not lose a man."

This was thought good ; we did not then divine
That peace and war ne'er travel hand-in-hand ;
That safety, fury, fierceness ne'er combine
To make the sweeping charge ; but thus 't was planned.
Our weapons should be mandrakes, as I said ;
Of these we 'd only throw the very softest,

Each should fire low, to save the other's head ;
Those should be beaten who were hit the oft'est ;
The short ones thought this partial to the loftiest.

For further stipulations, they were these :—

The thing should all be done in Indian style ;
When hotly pressed we'd dodge behind the trees,
Use every sort of trickery and wile
To lure the foe out on the open plain ;
Then springing forward like a pack of hounds,
Pour down our bolts swift as a shower of rain,
Covering ourselves with glory or with wounds.
“ Good, good ! ” all cried, and off each faction bounds.

And now the fray commences with a cheer,
Our humane stipulations are forgot ;
As the contending factions draw more near,
Excitement fans ; the flame of war grows hot,
And each fought but to conquer, and to be
A hero in embryo ; sweet to tell
Would be the story of the victory.
Now all ring forth the savage, piercing yell,
Outvying that when great Tecumseh fell.

The varying tide of battle ebbs and swells
Charge and retreat, or countermarch, or fly,
Till sore with brittle shot, and mellow shells
Which burst, in darkness veiling either eye,
A youthful brave, with hands raised o'er his head,
Fell prostrate with a cry as if of pain.
All stood aghast ! we thought our comrade dead :
His body rolled lank down the sloping plain,—
The fray was o'er, the ruse was not in vain.

Then each related what his part had been
In the late action, what he saw and felt,
How he was pummell'd, being in between
Two storming parties ; then how he had dealt
His swift-hurled missiles, how he had to beat
(His ammunition gone, he sorely prest)
A quick, but not inglorious retreat.
“ But, boys, who came off first-, who second-best,
Let blackened eyes and swollen cheeks attest.”

These were our sports, our pastimes, and our joys :
Wild, free, and thoughtless, few we had of cares,

These find small favor in the eyes of boys,—
But, Time, thy hand hath sown these noxious tares
In rank profusion o'er the severed few
That yet survive to ponder on the past !
The broken remnant of that merry crew,
Thou hast dispersed them as the whirlwind's blast
Scatters the autumn leaves at random cast.

Where are they now ? My voice breaks from control,
'T is loud and plaintive, though I would speak low ;
And sympathizing Echo, from the knoll,
Bears back the import of my query, " now " ?
Aye " now " ; why not ? I know of *then* 't was here :
But many changeful years have passed since *then* ;
And all that youthful band, to memory dear,
Who now may live, are changed to scheming men
That ne'er shall meet on these fair shores again.

Bright Gem of Waters ! let me ask of *thee* !
Thou wert the guardian of their happiest days,
Where are they now whose wild shouts, glad and free,
Oft made these green hills vocal with thy praise ?

No Moslem ever knelt at Mecca's shrine,
When the long, weary pilgrimage was o'er,
With purer thoughts than they have bowed to thine ;
Thy Kaba, these wild hills, this curving shore—
Where are they now who seemed almost t' adore ?

Thy rippling wavelets glide toward the shore,
They murmur playfully about my feet,
They seem to whisper of my friends of yore
A truthful tale, yet mournful to repeat :
“ Some fill the soldiers' grave in sunny climes,—
They gave their lives that bondsmen might be free ;
Some seek for riches in the distant mines ;
Some died in youth ; some are beyond the sea :
All have forsook our presence, all save thee.”

“ Oh, for the power to build the lofty rhyme ! ”
That ye might still associate in song,
I would abridge my days, compound with Time,
And sink to sleep among earth's vanquished throng
Without a murmur, feeling I were blest,
In that with thine, their names should still be known,

When they and I were in eternal rest.

It cannot be ! the past 's forever flown,
And I must wander on thy shores alone.

Oh, the deep import of that word " alone " !

I never felt its meaning until *now*.

Though I have wandered in strange lands where none

Have borne me company, save only Thou,
Spirit of Nature, yet I felt to be

In fellowship with all thy various shapes ;
But here, though all 's familiar to me,

There is a silent emptiness which gapes
The soulless solitude the hermit apes.

There is a something wanting in the scene,

(Faces and forms I shall behold no more.)

And something in the seër too, I ween,

(That youthful buoyancy nought can restore.)

Thy waters are as clear, thy shores as fair

As when I first beheld thee long ago ;

The change is but in me, and those who were

Then with me ; but throughout the world 't is so,

Yet all men mourn it, why, I scarcely know.

'T is only idle grief for what must be—

 The change and losses that must come to all ;

But as I stand communing now with thee,

 Thy presence doth so vividly recall

The happy past, that verily it seems

 Each playmate should stand forth with : “ Here am I ! ”


And that they come not, doth dispel all dreams,

 And solemnly recalls the reasons why,

As I turn from thee with a deep-drawn sigh.

SHUNEENA, THE MAID OF THE LAKE.

1875.

N a great brown boulder, standing
Like a pedestal commanding
In the margin of the lake,
Stood a youth of quiet seeming,
Like a statue stood he dreaming,
While the full-orbed moon its teeming
Floods of light around him brake.

On his arm a three-pronged lance was
Resting, and anon his glance was
Turned into the waters near,
Watching if some finny rover
In the shadows might not hover,
Or might wantonly pass over
In the death-range of his spear.

But though he could hear them splashing,
Through the glassy surface crashing
Just above him and below,
Not a fish but, passing, bent on
Out of range ; as though intent on
Other shoals, they darting went on,
Till he wondered why 't was so.

Presently he fell to musing
All unconsciously—not choosing—
For the witchery around
Made it seem a scene enchanted,
And the very air seemed haunted
With a mystery transplanted
From some supernat'ral bound.

On the shore the forest hoary
Towered in primeval glory
(This was many years ago),
And the tree-frogs piped their chorus—
Crooned their screeds in tones sonorous,
While a great sheet of phosphorus
Seemed the lake in moonlit glow.

Half entranced he mutely wondered—
In the past, by ages sundered,
 While the savage reigned supreme—
If some rude seer, or magician
With the wand of superstition,
Had not from this scene Elysian
 Conjured substance from a dream ;

Or if some bright sylph-like creature,
Beautiful in form and feature,
 Had not come to sudden ill
On this mirrored plain of water,
And if *Manitou* had taught her
To return, a spirit daughter,
 And at times to haunt it still.

Then, as thus he stood there gazing,
Lo ! a white mist slowly raising,
 Like a thin transparent veil,
Came toward the shore-line creeping—
Came in silvery vapor heaping
'Mong the shadows, and lay sleeping
 'Long the margin dim and pale.

Suddenly he heard the dipping
Of a paddle, then the dripping,
 Crystal trickling from the oar ;
Then among the shadows gleaming,
Through the misty border beaming,
A canoe of wondrous seeming
 Gliding came along the shore.

All the prow was decked with shining
Shells and agates, and entwining
 Woven on the birchen side,
Groups of figures many-tinted,
Forms of birds and mammals hinted,
In the moonlight softly glinted,
 Worked in quills of hedgehog dyed.

Like a princess of Sumatra,
Beautiful as Cleopatra
 Seated on Egypta's throne,
Sat a radiant Indian maiden
In that novel barque, arrayed in
Skirt of fur and sash of braid, in
 Which the rarest wampum shone.

'Neath her sash a fawn-skin, dappled
Waist, with fish-hawk talons grappled
At the front, to hold it there,
Clasped her form, and grains of copper,
Strung, and knit in bracelets proper,
Shone, as she would raise or drop her
Dusky arms, which, else, were bare.

'Round her shapely neck extended,
Beads of many hues were blended—
Beads of tortoise, chert, and spar;
And from out their folds hung fastened
A white leaf of pearl, and christened
With the dews of night it glistened
On her bosom like a star.

Gathered back in dark profusion
Was her hair, then in seclusion,
Part was shaped into a crown
Fastened with an eagle's feather
And with bead-strings held in tether,
While the most hung altogether
Far below her shoulders down.

Gliding slowly by she drifted
In her barque, and just uplifted
 Gleamed her paddle's dripping blade,
Then with graceful stroke descending
Fell again, the light shaft bending
In her hands as crept she wending
 Down the belt of mist and shade.

On she passed thus slowly rowing,
Her slight craft in splendor growing
 Dimmer in the farther night,
But her flashing paddle glimmered
In the distance still, then shimmered
Fainter yet along the timbered
 Shore, and faded out of sight.

In the west the moon was sinking
To the hills, in glory linking
 With her orb the earth and sky,
But the youth's enchanted gaze was
Eastward fixed, and on his face was
Awe and wonder, till all trace was
 Lost, when thus he spake : " Good-by !

“O though beautiful Shuneena !
Spirit Maid of Lake Geneva,
Shall I ne’er behold thee more ?
Thou hast vanished ! Indecision
Fills my soul ! Was ’t but a vision ?”
Then the tree frogs croaked derision
All along the darkling shore.

Then beyond a point appearing
Once again, he saw her, nearing
To an overhanging oak,
Which, as she passing under,
Lo ! its great trunk snapt asunder,
And with crashing sound of thunder
Whelmed her, and the spell was broke.

IN THE DEEP, TANGLED FOREST.

IN the deep, tangled forest I roamed when a boy,
Absorbed and enchanted by solitude's spell,
Till I grew a young hermit, and found sweetest joy
Where Nature, untrammelled, primeval did dwell.

The shy, woodland denizens all seemed my friends,
And with cautious timidity oft would draw near,
Urged on by the power curiosity lends,
In confidence partly, and partly in fear.

The "coo" of the pigeon, the mourning dove's note,
Were sounds that delighted my too pensive ear ;
And the pheasant's wild tattoo, loud beaten by rote
To the song of the thrush full of music and cheer.

The whispering branches, when stirred by the breeze,
Related a story addressed to my soul ;

And the autumn's sere leaves, as they fell from the trees,
Awakened strange feelings I scarce could control.

'T was a pleasure to climb up the steep, jutting cliff,
And stray 'long the smooth, pebbly beach of the lake ;
To launch on the waters the miniature skiff,
Or thread the wild maze of the vine-tangled brake.

To gaze from the bluff on the clear, placid bay,
Where wild water-fowls swam, in such proud grace,
along,
For nought seemed so free and so happy as they,
Whose flight was a poem, whose floating a song.

'T was a pastime to watch, solemn, perched on some limb,
The kingfisher scanning the waters below,
Till close to the surface some "shiner" should swim,
Then see him shoot down like a shaft from a bow.

The splash of his falling and lifting his prey
Was followed by plunges of terrified frogs,
While lake turtles drew in their heads in dismay,
And dropped in the water from shore-clinging logs.

'T was a study to note how the catfish would take
Her great family with her, as if for a stroll,—
A black cloud of young bull-heads, they followed her
wake,
Gliding close to the strand o'er the pebble-floored
shoal.


With what care would she guard them ! how oft turn
about
To see if her ebony darlings were there !
How playfully toss them upon her blunt snout !
How hurry them off when of danger aware !

'T was a joy to behold, on their wide-arching wings,
The white gulls careering about through the air ;
But the wheeling black eagles, the fierce forest kings,
When afloat o'er the woods brought both joy and de-
spair.

Once I watched one of these, up away, proudly soar
In the blue, cloudless heavens, a speck black as night ;
While a craving came o'er me I ne'er felt before,
And I envied the monarch his powers of flight.

THE OLD LIME-KILN ON THE LAKE SHORE.

JULY, 1881.

T the rounded point of a bold, high bank,
Where the spray oft leapt to its circling rim,
The old lime-kiln stood, like a great stone tank,
With its front exposed, all smoky and grim ;
And its rude stone arch, where the fireman stood,
Like a wild, weird gnome, as on many a night
He fed its red, fiery mouth with wood,
While the ruddy gleam of its glowing light
A giant shadow cast of him
That reached far out on the placid lake,
Like a fall'n Colossus darkly lain
In a restless dream, or chained, awake,
And tossing its limbs on the glassy plain.

The clean white stones from along the shore,
That the wavelets for ages and ages had washed—
That had thrilled in each ice-flaw's startling roar

For untold winters, and had bleached in the sun
Through all the years since the world had begun,
For aught I know, and had been dashed
Against by the crested waves, till worn
As smooth to the touch as polished horn ;
These were gathered, and floated down to fill
The hungry void in the quaint old kiln.

Ah, what lime was that which these lake-shore stones
In the pit of the old lime-kiln became !
They seemed like sections of mammoth's bones
Bleached whiter than snow by the crucial flame,
Each having the true metallic ring,
And a heart of fire that would hum and sing,
And burst into bloom like a milk-white rose,
When water fell on its thirsty skin,
And the opening seams would soon disclose
The fairer whiteness still within ;
'T is remembered by some in the country still
Is the famous yield of the old lime-kiln.

The old lime-kiln stood close at hand
To the place where we boys were wont to swim,

And it seemed to watch over lake and land,
And to guard our clothes when we had gone in,
And to take some part in each acted whim
By a gloomy frown or a smoky grin,
And to mark our actions of every kind
On the lake in front or the hills behind.

When an old blind horse was swum far out,
By a nude boy 'stride of his bony back,
And was left in the waters, in darkness and doubt,
To find by "instinct" the shoreward tack,
And, instead, he circled around and around,
As though groping for bottom his feet might touch,
Till it seemed quite likely he would be drowned,
Then the grim old kiln seemed to stand aloof
(As though it would say, "That is too much")
And frown down on us a stern reproof,
Till the boy and his mate swam out once more,
And towed the blind equine back to shore.

And so when we caught a saucy bull
One day in the lake, out up to his knees,

Lashing his sides with his wet tail, cool,
And chewing his cud at his surly ease,
And we charged down on him fifteen strong,
Pelting him out till he had to swim,
Then followed after swimming along—

Oh! did n't we give him a "flawy breeze"
And make navigation odious to him?—

With his tail for a rudder we steered him out
And piled on his back till he disappeared

In the clear warm drink, when with angry flout
He shook us off, and upward reared

In the water again, and again we turned
And boarded him till at last he lowed—

Admitting the lesson he had learned,—
There's a way to humble the strong and the proud.

'T was a vigorous lesson well bestowed,
For the brute was most completely cowed,
And we let him struggle in to the strand,
Panting and weary from being dipped,

Where he braced himself on the good firm land,
And stood for awhile until he dripped,
Then staggered heavily up the hill
By the grinning mouth of the old lime-kiln.

When the flat-bottomed boat was overturned

Far out for a stand from which to dive,
And the water about it to bubbles churned

By swimming boys, like bees round a hive,
Some scrambling up on the slippery steep,
Some plunging headlong into the deep
And striking down thirty feet away
Toward where the shining ransom lay—
A silver dime, 't was an envied prize,—
And with humming ears and straining eyes
At length one stretches forth his hand
And clutches it from the bottom's sand,
Then up again to the light of day
Where the trophy 's held up for display,
When the cheers that greeted, wild and shrill,
Were echoed back from the old lime-kiln.

Of dry red cedar, our gathered hoard

Was brought to the place and finely split,
And close by the lime-kiln snugly stored

Till the time arrived when we needed it,—
The warm, spring nights when the suckers ran

And the pike and bass came near to the shore,—
When stowing it on the boat began,
And the “jack” was filled and stuck in the bow,
The spears thrown in and the great torch lit ;

Now we pull down the margin with muffled oar,
And the spearsmen stand in the front of the scow
For a sharp look-out, and the shadows flit
As we glide 'neath the overhanging trees,
And the bright sparks fly from the torch in showers
And fall like golden snow on the lake ;

Whirled out by the gently-stirring breeze
It sinks adown till each burning flake
Is quenched in the waters. To test their powers'
Did the spearers launch out many a thrust,

Till many a finny prize was ours ;
While the old stone pen, still true to its trust
Kept its watch fire glimmering far away,
Till we paddled back gayly across the bay
With oar-strokes timed by the whippoorwill
That called from the oak near the old lime-kiln.

But things have changed since the “long ago,”
For the ever-moving tide of years

Has borne from thence in its ceaseless flow

All those who rowed to that night bird's cheers,
While sun and storm, growth and decay
Have all been busy in their way,
And ruin is tenant now, at will,
Of all that 's left of the old lime-kiln.

Now the the circling walls are fallen in,

And the grass grows green round the crumbling stone,
And the brave old oak that so long had been

The kiln's companion, is lying prone,—
As though it could not bear to stay
When its warm, old friend had passed away,
It has stretched itself along the hill
And died on the grave of the old lime-kiln.

The rude stone arch, too, has disappeared,

And in the front where the fireman stood,
A white-barked birch has sprung and reared

Its ghostly trunk, and two young oaks brood
In mournful silence close at hand,
And the three in full-leafed beauty stand,
To shade and mark and memorize still
The sunken tomb of the old lime-kiln.

A few more years and the well-known spot
Will not retain e'en a single trace
That it ever was,—it will be erased
By the ever-busy hand of time.
A few more years and the world will not,
Of all who once sported about its base,
Have kept for itself a single name
Or preserved one memory uneffaced,
But all will simply be forgot.
Unspoiled by praise, untouched by blame,
What lot could be truly more sublime?
But while they live, like a sweet, wild chime,
The memories of the past shall thrill
Their hearts when they muse of the old lime-kiln.

ROWING.

LIGHTLY lift the dripping oars,
Swing them back with graceful sweep ;
Deftly plant the dipping oars,
Pull ! Now see our light boat leap,
Driven o'er the laughing deep
With the dipping, dripping oars.

Like the gull on arching wing
Beating through the buoyant air,
Make the ashen pinions swing,
Rise and fall, each pliant pair,
As we speed 'twixt emerald shores
Flying on with flashing oars.

Full of glory, swathed in gold,
Just upon the evening's sea
Sol is launching ; from his hold
Lifts the light that is to-day's,
On each side in spreading rays
Poised toward to-morrow's shores
Like gleaming banks of golden oars.

Now the gloaming gently falls,
Settling over lake and skies,
While the cuckoo's madrigals
And the nightingale's replies
Softly echo from the shores
As we gently ply our oars.


Sweetly broods the evening calm,
While the swell of distant song
Fills the air like dulcet balm,
As we smoothly glance along
'Twixt the distant shadowy shores
Gliding on with muffled oars.

Phosphor-sided, sickle-bowed,
Riding up the sky's blue lee,
Now the dainty crescent moon
Pulls behind a cape of cloud,
But again emerging soon,
To'ard the far cerulean shores
Paddles on with silver oars.

In a dream of joy and peace
Sleeping Nature seems to be,
And our light strokes slowly cease
Till in listless ecstasy,
Floating on 'twixt slumbering shores,
Muse we, resting on our oars.

Hark ! how loudly calls the loon !
Ripples flutter o'er the lake,
White clouds scud athwart the moon,
Startled Nature is awake ;
Trees are nodding from the shores,
And we bend us to the oars.

CISCOES.

LEEK finny beauties ! each o'erlapping scale
Of silver in your shining coats of mail
Proclaims you fitting denizens to bide
In the one matchless lake where you reside,
The angler's joy, the epicurean's pride.

Long years ago, I recollect a day
When idly floating in a skiff I lay
Watching, communing with the sweet profound
Pulsings of nature throbbing all around,
In scene of beauty, and in shoreward sound.

The evening came ; the breeze sank into sleep,
The lake calmed down to one unwrinkled sweep
Of glassy smoothness, and from either shore
Myriads of long-winged flies came fluttering o'er
The limpid plain, 'lighting to rise no more.


Then from the placid waters everywhere
The supple ciscoes, rising, flashed in air,
With open muzzles seized the floating flies,
Then somersaulted backward with their prize,
Again on a like errand to arise.

Far off and near, small circling ripples broke
From upward thrust and down incisive stroke
Of leaping fishes, rising still again
To pluck winged manna from the liquid plain
And spring white arches o'er the crystal main.

It was as if contending armies strove
Beneath the waters, and their bright blades clove
Above the surface,—like the crescent sweep
Of polished cimeters, the upward leap
Of silver sabres flashing from the deep.

JOHN BARLEYCORN, THE HIGHWAYMAN.

1872.

H, how time speeds away !
Why, it seems but a day
Since that onslaught, so fearfully tragic :
I can't make it appear
That almost a year
Has vanished ; it seems so like magic.

* * *

Since dread three-fingered Jack
With Joaquin and his pack
Gathered toll in our Western possessions ;
Or since gallant Duval,
Turpin, Sheppard, and all
Those old trumps of the " genteel professions,"

There 's been naught to compare
With the pad we have here ;
And when I relate you 'll believe me,

The great prince of them all,
Whether burly or tall,
Is the roadster of famed Lake Geneva.

'T was a dark silent night,
Not a star was in sight,
When a horseman came up on a canter :
He had been into town,
And was done rather "*brown*,"
Bold and fearless as great Tam O'Shanter.

On the lone sandy beach
There's a desolate stretch
Where the trees have all left on a "bender"—
All save one grim old scrub,
A bleached, weather-worn stub,
Weird and scrawny as she of old Endor.

He was nearing this spot,
All his cares were forgot,
He was happy, gay, merry, and cheerful,
When there slipt from a niche
In this old wooden witch
A *something*, which made him feel fearful.

A dread, ominous shape,
With its face veiled in crape,
It roared out "Halt ! pungle ! no whining !
If you speak, I 'll be sworn
You shall ne'er see the morn,
And the sun of your life shall cease shining."

Fitz Quinn, wishing for speed,
Put the spurs to his steed,
The threat of the robber not heeding,
When an arm like a rail
Cleft the air like a flail,
And our hero lay senseless and bleeding.

Stepping up cool and calm
To the still prostrate form,
He quietly searched ev'ry pocket ;
Taking ev'ry thing out
He arranged them about
And thus entered all down in his docket :

" 1 old cork-screw, 3 quills,
2 small fractional bills,

1 jack-knife, and five-cent nickel ;
1 stub five-cent cigar,
2 checks ' good at the bar,'
Some hair dye, 1 vinegar pickle."

Having made up his mind
'T was no very great find,
He hid in his roost near the waters,
Saying, " The poor devil 's slack
So I put it all back ;
And the *cash*, I 'll get that at headquarters.

MORAL.

All ye good men of Linn,
When perchance you have been
To the flourishing town of Geneva,
Have an eye to the coast,
Shun the dread " robber's roost "
Lest the terrible inmate relieve ye.

In advice I would say
'T is the much safer way
To come home in the light of the day, man ;

Staying late you may fall
'Neath the slung-shot or maul
Of John Barleycorn, the highwayman.

I have seen in my time
Men of every clime
Crawling round on all-fours like a cayman.
Why? The reason was plain ;
They had met, not in vain,
With John Barleycorn, the highwayman.

When at eve you begin,
That is, when you start in
To end up a glorious day, man,
Have a care, lest ere morn
 You be gored
 By the "*horn*,"
 Or be floored
 By the "*horn*,"
And your pockets completely explored
 By the "*horn*,"
And your cash from thence borne
You be left all forlorn,

All the rights of your manhood ignored

By the "*horn*."

With your face scratched and torn,

And your eyes left to mourn,

By the magical,

Tragical,

Wonderful "*horn*"

Of this strange unicorn,

Famed,

And surnamed

John Barleycorn, the highwayman.

MUSING.

1870.

STANDING one day upon the mountain side,
Musing with folded arms on nature's plan,
My vision swept the landscape far and wide
In quest of something to compare with man,—
Some natural object, that I might compare
In some one attribute to man's estate,
That seemed some common good or ill to share,
Or was made kindred by some common fate.

Far to the left there stretched a sterile plain
Bounded by barren mountains grim and gray,—
A scene where desolation seemed to reign,
And solitude chase ev'ry joy away.
'T was like the heart whose ev'ry hope is dead,
To which a moment's gladness is unknown,
The weary soul whence joy and peace have fled,
Sinking in death uncared for and alone.

Still to the right, far up from where I stood,
The terraced hills rose o'er each other high
Till, crowning all, the antipode of flood,
Was one vast peak whose summit pierced the sky.
Like some proud autocrat this mountain seemed,
Whom straggling chance had placed beyond the rest,
To keep aloof 't a glorious charter deemed,
Frowning on all below with haughty crest.

Before me lay a hilly, wooded tract,—
A mighty forest, stretching far away,
Of fir and cedar, pine and tamarack,
A goodly host of trees in strange array :
Some stood in clumps, compact communities,
With still a few among them that did vie
In rivalry ; while overtopped by these
Were the great masses doomed to be less high.

Some stood apart and grew in solitude,
And these were deeply rooted in the soil,
With twisted trunks, and branches gnarled and rude
From many jostlings in the savage coil

Of chafing storms, which often and again
Rock the whole forest in their surging wrath,
Sweep down the slopes, and scour the level plain,
To spread destruction in their luckless path.

The most were of a lively verdant hue ;
A few were withered by the lightning's stroke ;
And some were slowly dying as they grew ;
Some were bare poles from which the tops were broke ;
Still more were dead and leafless at the top ;
Some leaned upon their neighbors for support ;
While others still seemed hunting for a prop ;
Some near the middle had been broken short ;

Some had been stript of bark and branch and leaf,
And stood like tow'ring spectres bleached and white ;
Some, once environed in a flaming sheath,
Were left grim columns, blacker than the night.
Hale and diseased, the dying and the dead,
For which each passing breeze sends forth a call
Which part obey : before its unseen tread
Some yield their place and totter to their fall.

Prone stretched in all the stages of decay,
 Laid low by time and tempest, now repose
 The prostrate giants of a by-gone day
 That one time waved their verdant boughs like those
 That now o'ershadow them ; but now they lie
 And crumble back to earth which gave them growth,
 Epitome of mutability !
 Nature is change ! mortality is both !


* * * * * *

How like this mighty forest is mankind !—
 Dwelling unmoved among the countless graves
 Of fellows, fallen in all the time gone by,
 Thousands are gone where one is left behind,
 Till all this rounded earth beneath the sky
 Is one vast sepulchre. The living tread
 Among a mazy wilderness of tombs,
 And the rank soil which all the fair world paves
 Is mellow with the ashes of the dead :
 Yet out of death, life cometh ! Vigor blooms
 Anew from dissolution ! All life's forms,
 Fallen and faded out, yield back again
 Life's essences in them released by death ;

Their garnered sunlight can defy the storms,
And in the gold cones of the mountain pine,
And on the warm glow of the skylark's plumes,
And in a thousand ways, may mount and shine
All radiant amid clouds. The very breath
Of all that ever lived, still is ; and still,
So is the beauty, so the grief and pain,
The hope and triumph. All, 't is true, have been
Lived o'er and o'er again—inherited
By all the living, and bequeathed in turn
By all the dying, since the world began.
What dies with one, another lives to learn ;
Nothing is lost in Nature's rounded plan !
True what *is*, may be varied day by day,
But nothing more ; it still exists alway.
No dainty coloring on the meadow flower,
Nor blush-tint upon fair, coy maiden's cheek,
Nor good resolve of any living will
Perisheth ! Their frail abodes decay,
And lose their mission of reflecting power ;
No more than this. Voices rise up and speak
Anew the thoughts borne down the centuries

From their first utterance ; unchronicled,
And yet immortal. Silent symphonies—
The music of the universe is held
In Nature's vast embrace, and slumbering
Till wakened to expression by deft hands
Leading it forth from pipe and reed and string
And launching it in one harmonious thrill
Upon the ages. All the boundless love
Lavished by kindly hearts on humankind
In East or West through all the various lands
Since hearts first beat, is strong and active still,
Bearing our race in its encircling arms
Beyond the reach of malice, and above
The touch of cruelty, it leaves behind.

THOUGHTS IN A POTTERS' FIELD.

O vacant spaces left between
For coming friends ! No tenement
Unoccupied ! No "rooms to rent" !
This city of the pauper dead,
How equally inhabited !
Whene'er a corpse comes to the town,
The sordid sexton plants it down
In the next pit upon the street,
And so on, till the square 's complete.

Above each grassy oblong mound
Is placed a small white wooden cross,
To mark the grave of each whose loss
Was the world's gain. But where abound
These symbols, that is holy ground.

Shades of the lowly dead ! You sleep
As peaceful in these humble graves,
As could the haughtiest prince whose slaves

E'er mounted guard about his dust
Confined in grand sarcophagus !
Historic page or sculptured bust
Speak not of you who lie below
These simple crucifixes ! No !
Man has no word of praise for those
Whose labors have not reaped success,
However hard they 've toiled ; much less
For such as you, whose wretchedness
'Tis said was self-induced. *Your* woes
Were not a theme of much concern.
If aught *you* did deserved to earn
You sympathy, God only knows.

Yet, how many lie sleeping here,*
Indebted even for a grave,
Had once high hopes, and loves as dear,
And prospects bright, and hearts as brave
As many whom the world to-day
Calls great, and honors ? And to say
"Some trifling chance, some sudden doubt

* Paupers' burying-ground at San Francisco, 1866.

Their circumstances changed about,"
Might be but true. The poorest knave
Of all who sleep beneath this sod
Had of the attributes of God !
Perhaps the exercise of these
E'en brought about his worthlessness !
That pity which relieves distress
Wherever found, he may have shown,
Till from his slender store was flown
The wherewithal to stay his own ;
And turning, mayhap, in his need,
To whom his charity once freed
From pressing want, he has been turned
Away with taunts, aye, even spurned ;
Until, in bitterness, his pride
And self-respect were laid aside,
And every manly trait has died
And left him the poor wretch he was.

Perhaps 't was love's seductive pow'r
O'ertook him in a luckless hour,
And when too late to be retraced

He found, alas ! it was misplaced,
His peace destroyed, his name disgraced,
And having not the strength of will
To rise and struggle onward still,
Hung loitering by the way, and fell
A victim to despondency,
And idleness and vagrancy
Closed on a life begun so well.

And some lie here, upon whose cheek
The bloom and smiles of beauty played ;
Fair maidens once, whose lives displayed
The loveliness of innocence
And modesty and virtue meek.
Aye ! more than one poor nameless waif,
Who, once the light of some fair home,
The darling of a mother's heart,
A sister's stay, a brother's pride,
The gem of a fond father's care,
The one-time seeming counterpart
Of all that 's good and true and rare
And beautiful, lies sleeping here ;

She loved, perhaps, and was betrayed,
And in her grief and shame intense
She lost all saving faith, and trod
The path that leads away from God,
Until in squalid want she died,
And took that last sad earthly ride,
In rags, upon the pauper's bier.

Yes, truly, this is holy ground !
Christ's precious blood has purchased this !
Iscaiot, repenting, found
No respite from a crime like his.
The " thirty pieces," treason's hire,
He cast upon the temple's floor,
Then threw his wretched life away.
The high-priests were abashed, and they
The scattered coinage counted o'er,
And said (whatever their desire) :
" 'T is price of blood, and cannot be
By law placed in the treasury."
And so to bury strangers in
They bought with it the potters' field.

Some small atonement for their sin,
For He who loved the poor, and healed
The halt, the palsied, and the blind,
Compassion had on all mankind,
Especially for those in need,
The homeless stranger, the unfed,
The widowed and the orphanèd,
Who often, e'en in death, indeed,
"Had not whereon to lay their head."

God's acres these, where'er they be !
In lonely, sad Jerusalem
Or by this far-off western sea.
The Master's blood has paid for them ;
He holds the undisputed fee.
Those stranded on Time's shifting shoals,
The weary, worn, and jaded souls
Whose lives go out in poverty ;
Those wrecked on Crime's hard rocky lee,
And those who die in noisome gaols,
The friendless and unfortunate,
The fallen unregenerate,
The frail and erring Magdalene,—

All, whom no mortal mourns or cares,
Whose bodies no one claims as theirs
To give them decent burial,
For such the *Humble Nazarene*
Has here a welcome, one and all.

Let no man harshly judge of those
Here gathered in the sepulchre,
For they are Christ's ; He will dispose
In Mercy's name of all who err.
The light they had, what they withstood,
Their acts of evil, and of good,
Their ev'ry thought to him is known ;
And He who would condemn not her
Who was accused of heinous sin
Be He their judge ; He will not fail
To make their every good avail.
If men should judge, who would begin,
Who take it on himself alone
And sinless hurl at these a stone ?

THE CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE.

JAN. 1, 1872.

THE clock strikes twelve ! The passing year
Silent recedes from off time's stage !
Thou grave of hope ! Thou ghost of fear !
Thou vehicle of many a tear !
Thou, too, art lain upon the bier
And borne away !


What changes have thy seasons brought ?
What lessons unto youth and age
Has thy administration taught ?
What havoc, what destruction wrought ?
What bloody battles have been fought
Whilst thou held sway ?

What windings in the path of fate
Thy brief career hath brought to view ?
What homes were rendered desolate ?
What rulers sank beneath the weight

Of an abused, misgoverned state ?
What need to tell.

Sure, some have watched *thee* out to-night,
And seen thy place filled by the new,
Whate'er befall, whate'er betide,
Whate'er may in the future bide,
Will scarcely wish thee aught beside
A long farewell.

“THE YOUNG MAY DIE; THE OLD
MUST DIE.”

“HE young *may* die.” The prattling little babe
Whose velvet-fingered touch has often thrilled
Our heartstrings with a nameless melody,
Whose sweet-lipped lisplings often have beguiled
Us from our cares, whose eyes ope’ wide to see
Them in our own ; its antics may be stilled
By the Relentless One, but this we know—
“The old *must* die.”

“The young *may* die.” When all the world seems fair,
And life seems full of joyousness, and Hope
Paints rounds of triumph upon fields untried,
Still do we learn we are within the scope
Of the Grim Arbiter ; and from his chair,
To such his sentence comes intensified,
Because fair youth is stricken. Yet ’t is so,—
“The old *must* die.”

"The young *may* die." And so the middle-aged,
The man of iron frame and giant mind,
In noonday strength and vigor may be called
To quit the task on which he is engaged,
Or leave the love and plaudits of mankind
To meet the King of Terrors unappalled ;
But Nature writes upon her every page—
"The old *must* die."

"The young *may* die." The many maladies
To which mankind are all unwilling heirs
Still reap their greatest harvest 'mid the young.
But though the aged may escape all these,
Yet is their end near by, for unawares
Time steals upon them till they stand among
Life's evening shadows. As the sun goes down
"The old *must* die."

"The young *may* die," but with the hoary-haired
The doubt is changed unto a certainty ;
True, they may yet a little while be spared,
Yet scarce we look about us but we see
Some venerable friend quit at the call


Which soon must be obeyed by each and all ;
While others, silvering, fill the vacant stage.

“The old *must* die.”

“The young may *die*,” we very aptly say,
But, of the old, who 've given life the test
Of long experience, *they* rather *pass away*,
As one when wearied falls asleep to rest ;
They would not care to run the race again ;
They quit the course without remorse or pain,
Seeing a blessing in the phrase well known—
“The old must die.”

FAREWELL, OLD YEAR!

JAN. I, 1877.

AREWELL, Old Year ! Forever fare thee well,
Thou latest past of time's unnumbered dead !
Now hast *thou* joined the interminable line
Of ghostly harbingers gone still before,
Who, joining shadowy hands, extend across
The gulf of countless ages and connect
(Like an invisible chain composed of links
Forged from the annual flights of dead duration)
Creation's morning with the present hour.

Adieu, Old Year ! although so lately here
Still art thou gone as irrevocably
Beyond recall, as though the mouldering pall
Of centuries obscured thee from the present ;
Yet shall the chroniclers and bards transcribe
The story of thy being,—what took place
Here on our little globe in thy brief stay :

The growing mastery of *mind* o'er *matter*,
The march of Science and the course of Empire,
The progress of the principles of freedom,
The desperate resistance of the powers
Of Bigotry, Unreason, and Misrule ;
The auspicious and triumphant rounding off
Of the first century of our Great Republic,
The cloud of agitation and distrust
Which afterward arose unwelcomely,
The strength, the weakness, the wisdom, and the folly
Of human kind exposed in thy career ;
The good and evil wrought by human will,
Nature's convulsions and tempestuous storms,
Shall be portrayed on the historic page
And on the deathless folio of song,
Blended together with thy own fair name,
And be a theme with men while time shall last,
And so thy memory shall never die.

So 't is the Years enact Earth's 'lotted part
In the grand drama of the Universe ;
On this small stage of time we call the Present—

This neutral space dividing the dead Past
From the conjectural and unborn Future,—
They come in turn to play their part in being ;
Come filing on in a continuous train
From out the closely-curtained Yet-to-Be,
And singly tread the lighted floor of Is,
Then pass beyond, even as thou hast done,
Into the still solemnity of Was.

LIVING IN THE PAST.

(WRITTEN IN REPLY TO SOME VERSES OF A FRIEND.)

FRIEND and companion of my early years,
Your "Lines" call up a host of memories
That lie close to my heart as do the tears
To a fond mother's eyes ; and as the breeze
Wakes from their rest the fallen autumn leaves
And winnows them to drifts among the trees,
So 't is the wafted breath of by-gone days
Collects the threads of memory's web and weaves
Their perfect semblance in the tinted maze.

Men are but boys with beards, and care, and thought ;
Forgetting these, they might live o'er again
The simple pleasures which their boyhood brought,
And happy be, and joyous, now as then.
"But to forget," you 'll say, "it cannot be !
Forget our toils and cares and troubles when
They meet and cling to us on every side ?
When wide awake can we forget to see ?
Or on the flying train forget to ride ?"

No, true ; but there are times when we may rest ;

And then, oblivious to all beside,

Live o'er again the olden times with zest

By *contrast* doubled ; *that* was *then* denied.

And we again in fancy may call o'er

The roll of our companions who have died,

And see them as they looked so long ago,

And play the same old games again once more,

And listen to the old brook's gurgling flow.

I find myself at times in the old yard

Before the school-house, early in the day,

Surveying lines across the level sward,

Then hear the famous, " pom-pom-pull-away ! "

Then scamper off to reach the further line,

Some nimble dodger pressing on me hard,

His hand outstretched to seize my wampus skirt,

His quick, hard breathing imitating mine ;

He gains and trips, we fall, but, " no one hurt."

We next produce our implements of play,

The stitched yarn ball and rudely fashioned bat ;

Then gather round in circular array,

The game proposed, the favorite "three old cat";
The bat is tossed and fisted for the "ins,"
"Whole hand or nothing! closed own!" and all that;
"One out, all out! choose sides!" and, "My first
choice!

And I 'll take Abe!" cries he who hap'ly wins,
With much parade, and highly piping voice.

And then the game goes on; we catch and throw,
And bat, and shout, and watch our chance to run,
And, in the terms of twenty years ago,
I almost scream out "Golly, aint it fun!"
Our little sweethearts, too, are standing there—
For you and I at *least* had always *one*.
(I used to wish I had a floating eye
To gaze upon my charmer everywhere
And scout around, a sort of optic spy.)

Abe was my bosom friend in those old days,
My allied force in trouble and distress;
He took my part in many various ways,
And acted Damon to my Pythias,
In all save this—he was American,

And used to say to me at times, "I guess
The Yankees are the bravest men afloat."
I was a stubborn little Englishman,
And this assertion tickled in my throat.

For I had read of valiant "Hearts of Oak,"
And heard my father sing the Duke of York,
Rob. Hood, and Little John, old Bolingbroke,
Young Hotspur, and some other human stork
Whose name now slips my mind, and so I said,
"He either was mistook, or in the dark."
I named my heroes over once again,
And mentioned, "One or two of them were dead,
But England always raised the bravest men."

He spoke of Bunker Hill, and Washington,
And how the Yankees down at *Tip'canoe*
Had drove the British under *Marion*.

"*He guessed he knew a little history too!*"
He rather beat me on authority,
And then he whispered, "Tell you what let's do!
Who do you think's the braver, you or I?"
I told him, "Rather guessed that I must be,
But anyhow at recess we would try."

When recess came, we slipt out unobserved
Behind the school-house, where none else could see,
And by the glory of two nations nerved
We kicked and cuffed each other lustily.
At length the teacher rapped a sash ; we quit
The rough discussion as to bravery ;
We had to go, but on some other day
We 'd try and meet again to settle it,
Unless we found it out some other way.

This was no vulgar brawl which I relate,
No vent to personal antipathy ;
Each battled for the glory of a State,—
The State's, not ours, defeat or victory :
'T was fin'ly settled on another plan,
That is, it was agreed that each should be
Called peers in courage, causes being same,
Whene'er the Yankees or the British ran ;
Such was the circumstance, they bore no blame.

In thinking o'er these scenes of former times
I find much pleasure, and some cause for grief ;
Such feelings call to life these simple rhymes

On my young friend, whose fair life was so brief :
For I did often mourn the gallant boy,
 Reproaching Death, that like a skulking thief
 Came, as a dread marauder in the night,
And robbed a household of its dearest joy,
 And with his icy digits snuffed my light.

Yes, thus he died ; and Ab. and Jim laid down
 Their hopeful lives that others might be free ;
And like two severed barges drifting roun',
 Wreck of the fleet, are only you and me ;
But let us grasp the helm, and strong and firm
 Direct our crafts o'er life's tempestuous sea,
 Running Death's channel under safe escort,
Make a fair showing for our lengthened term,
 And bring a goodly cargo into port.

They left us and we struggle on alone ;
 Still hope, and toil, and trust in the "To Be."
And now the airy dreams of youth are flown
 We grapple with the grim reality ;
We labor on from need and labor's sake,

And feel that all mankind are same as we,
Serving some end, in high or low estate,
Giving their might to that they undertake,
And if disabled, calmly "stand and wait."

THE SEASONS.

SPRING.

BRIGHT, joyous Spring ! season of life and growth !
Before thy sunny glance the icy chains
With which grim Winter bound this mighty zone
Are all dissolved to rills of trickling tears ;
And these absorbed to feed the swelling germs
That patient lie in the broad lap of Earth,
To quicken into life at thy approach.

The springing grass puts forth in tender shoots
Its countless bristling blades of living green,
Which length'ning droop, and with the early flowers
(Bright-figured filling for the verdant warp),
Weave the sweet carpet that adorns the fields.

And now a change ! The branches of the trees
That all the Winter long were bleak and bare,
Or clad in ice, and creaking in the gale

A weird, mysterious soliloquy—
Clanking their crystal fetters in complaint—
Now bud to leafy wands, that nod and sway
In meek obeisance to the passing breeze.

All Nature's tiny workers are astir,
And, waking from that slumber, almost death,
Gaze 'round awhile in silent wonderment,
Then earnestly address themselves to toil.
The dormant ant, roused from his lethargy,
Crawls upward from his subterranean cell,
And from the summit of his convex mound
Drinks the inspiring vigor of the sun ;
Then calls a council of his sleepy mates
To view the ruin which the storms have wrought
While all unconscious they have slept below,
And means devise to blot that ruin out,
(The winds have razed the outer battlements
And scattered *debris* through the avenues ;
The pelting rains have harrowed up the paths
And choked the entrance to the upper vaults ;
While the dread frost, in cold malignity,

Has heaved the deep foundations of their home,
And cracked the superstructure from its base ;)
And, swarming forth, the little artisans
Commence their labors on the vast repairs.

The feathered choristers have all returned,
And when the morning light first streaks the dawn
The modest robin pipes his cheery notes,
Nor quits his tuneful task until the sun
Swings his full circle o'er the eastern bar.
The lark, with merry twitter, skims the sward ;
And the trim, dainty thrush, from lofty perch,
Straining his speckled throat from very joy,
Pours out upon the breeze a flood of song.

Dense clouds of blackbirds swarm from tree to tree,
And hold their noisy concerts as they list,
Sparring and cooing in their changeful moods,
And wooing partners for the perfect life ;
While on some sunny morn the sleeping swain
Dreams of clear streamlets rippling o'er the rocks,
And wakes to hear, what oft he 's heard before—

The gladsome babble of the martins sleek,
From the old cot 'neath the projecting eaves.

Yonder in lovely pastures violets bloom
Among the springing grass, and dandelions,
Like golden brooches, gleam on verdant knolls—
The gently rounded breasts of Mother Earth,—
Jewelling the day-fields sweet, though transiently,
To match blue, vaulted areas of night
In their star-studded splendors. Frisking lambs,
Whose young limbs seem to twinkle with delight,
Staid rams, and solemn tauruses are here
To give day's constellations fitting forms.

All hail thee, Spring! thou great replenisher,
That clothes the tattered earth in virgin robes,
And fills the air with sweet, harmonious sounds!
That decks the hillsides with fair living gems,
And scatters beauty broadcast o'er the land!
That fills the soul of youth with lofty hopes
And makes him conscious of progressive power!
That whispers manhood: "Still the world moves on,
And wherefore should'st *thou* linger by the way!"

SUMMER.

Fair Summer, like a prince in flowing robes,
Sits now in state upon the throne of time ;
While Peace and Plenty, twin prime-ministers,
Exert for lasting good their heaven-sent powers,
And shower their blessings with a willing hand.
Contentment, too, in calm serenity,
Dwells on the landscape like a quiet smile,
And the world moves toward perpetual day.

All Nature is prolific loveliness !
The full-leafed trees have hid from sight their boughs,
And on their naked trunks poise in the air
Green shapely stacks of loosely pendent leaves,
Beneath whose grateful shade birds build their nests,
Carol their songs, and rear in peace their young.

Upon the fields the season's crop still stands !
As yet no gap of sickle or of scythe
Has marred the full completeness of the scene.
The grassy meads flash brightly in the sun,
And o'er the fields the thrifty, rustling corn

Flaunts its green ribbons in the gentle breeze ;
While the great seas of verdant cereals
Roll into chasing swells beneath its touch.

Grand, perfect Summer ! fulness of the year !
Time's brightest picture of productiveness !
Earth's crowning glory and complete reward !
Profusion's radiant mantle undefiled
Thrown o'er the bosom of a fruitful world !
Frost nor maturity have come as yet,
And still awhile the harvest is delayed.

The cock's shrill call proclaims the faintest dawn,
Then twilight's mellow margin follows on,
Then a red rim along the eastern sky,
Melting in turn, as now the rising sun
Ushers full-blown the glorious summer's morn.
Bird-songs and tinkling bells delight the ear,
And Nature's freshness after night's repose
Is grateful to the eye : each several sense
Discovers each a charm, and these all blend
To form a pleasing and harmonious whole.

Early to feed, the eager, greedy herds
Crop the sweet grass, now succulent with dew,
Till hunger is appeased, then roam at large
Searching the pastures for a dainty bite,
Until oppressed with day's increasing heat
They seek the shadows of the leafy groves
And lie them down, with sighs of deep content.

Upon the glowing earth the blazing sun
In rank profusion pours his steady rays
Till all the air with heat is tremulous
And radiating upward to the skies.
The birds have sought the shade and quit their songs
And folded for a time their wings in rest,—
All save the prowling kite ; with pinions spread
And downcast eyes, he grandly soars aloft
In the blue ether of the cloudless sky,
Extending still the circle of his flight,
Scanning with eager gaze the earth beneath,
Until he sights the victim of his search,
Then partly folds his wings, and, like a bolt,
Swoops down upon his unsuspecting prey,
And bears it to the eyrie of his young.

The growing shadows eastward slowly creep,
As sinks the sun upon the western sky,
And setting out of sight, throws back his beams,
Marking far up the arch his crimson wake,
Which, spreading, slowly fades, and twilight ebbs
Far out into the open sea of night,
Where darkness, spread upon the rising tide,
Steals o'er the earth on its returning flow,
And brings to end our typic Summer's day.

AUTUMN.

Rich, dreamy, mellow Autumn ! Nature droops !
Her glory is attained ! and Sadness now
Floats like a spirit in the hazy air.
The birds have flown, or silent hang their heads
As though in sorrow. From the orchard twigs
The glowing fruit hangs pendent, or is moved
To oscillation by the sluggish wind.
Now and anon, at little intervals—
Incapable the longer to resist
Earth's universal and unchanging law,—

Some yielding pippin severs from its stem
And falls submissive to the withered sword ;
Suggesting the effect of a like cause
Which plunged the mighty Newton into thought.

On the far, sloping hills, in courtly robes
Of variegated hue—crimson, and gold,
Purple, and all the shades that tint the bow,—
Serenely proud the forest beauties stand,
Tall tapering cones of fading foliage
Glowing resplendent 'neath the blushing sun ;
While yet beneath, of various dyes and grades,
The smaller trees and shrubs fill up a scene
Of sweet harmonious contrast. Yet 't is sad,
And sadness clings to ev'ry tinted leaf
And murmurs softly in the passing breeze.

'T is but the passing beauty of a day !
The flush of dissolution on the cheek
Of the declining year ! and even now
By ev'ry idle puff of wanton wind
Some leaflet is detached, and wavering sinks
Reluctant, zigzag, to receiving earth.

And still, not lonely long ! the first rude blast
Shall shower their fellows like the falling snow ;
And leave the boughs and branches stark and bare
To scourge the moaning winds that left them so.

Earth gave the infant Year his Spring-time grace,
Clothed him in green, and decked his brow with flowers ;
He throve in beauty, and the Summer came,
And with it strength, and vigor, and a charm
Of thoughtful and expressive tenderness
Rested on all beneath the deep blue sky.

Now golden Autumn holds his dreamy sway,
And ripe maturity is on the wane ;
While Earth calls on the Year to render back
His worn and faded garb. Thus piece by piece
The whole is given back. Old and bereft
(While desolating Winter comes apace),
The beggared Year sinks into apathy,
And the fierce frost shall lock his feeble pulse,
The virgin snow shall be his winding-sheet ;
The bleak, chill winds shall chant his funeral dirge
And Father Time entomb him in the past.

WINTER.

Winter has come ! The boist'rous winds proclaim
His stormy rule o'er forest, field, and glen,
And bear his chilling mandates on their wings.
The earth is naked, and the leafless twigs
Hint at the desolation after death ;
While the great forest, swaying in the blast,
And tossing wild its branches to the clouds,
Sings a sad requiem to the passing gale.

The crested clouds, urged by the chasing winds,
In ragged troops career along the sky
Like ghostly coursers rushing on to charge
The sombre phalanx near the horizon ;
While the retiring sun, far to the south,
Marks the diminished arch which spans the day,
And throws his slanting beams along the earth
In scanty numbers, and devoid of warmth.
The brook is dumb beneath its icy shroud,
Or only murmurs in an undertone
Plaintive remonstrance 'gainst the cruel power

Which veils it thus in solitude and gloom
To grope in darkness on its winding course.

Upon the tranquil surface of the lake,
While yet it slept in peaceful quietude,
The frost-king smote with his congealing wand,
And lo ! a polished plain, where school-boys glide
And wheel in wild gyrations to and fro,
Scrolling the glassy surface of the deep,
Firm shod on furrowed plates of polished steel.

And now a change ! the sky is overcast,
And from its leaden vault, each chasing each,
Descend the filmy particles of snow.
Faster and thicker still they tumble down,
Veering in spiral course, and eddying,
Till all the air is white with gauzy flakes,
Whirling, commingling, sinking to the earth.

The clouds dispel ! the sun glints forth again
To greet the world arrayed in spotless white.
The winds are muffled, and a peaceful calm
Has settled over all ; while here and there,

Rising unbroken far into the sky,
Blue shafts of smoke, in graceful symmetry,
Point the location of the homes beneath.


The frolic-loving young folk are astir
Mittened and muffled, waiting for the sleigh ;
And soon the air vibrates from tuneful bells,
As mettled coursers dash along the way,
Responsive to the driver's word of cheer.

Forth launching in the downy element,
With mincing step, and ankle-scraping gait,
The sturdy urchin plows his way from school,
Stopping anon, perhaps to trace his name
In monstrous capitals beside his path,
To shake the white coat from some bending bush,
Or cast himself full length upon his face
To take his impress in the yielding drift.

The chill and silent night steals on apace,
And from the cold blue sky the myriad stars
Look calmly down upon the shrouded earth,
And tip with light the crystallated snow.

Along the northern border of the night
Flash up the footlights of the Arctic stage ;
While just beyond, extended from the spheres,
With centre looped into the Galaxy,
Aurora's ruffled curtain hangs in view.

AFTER THE SLEET.

FTER the sleet, and the sun is beaming,
And winter is wearing a brilliant smile ;
While the trees in their icy armor gleaming
Are steel-clad knights in their martial seeming ;
And like silvery plumes from their helmets streaming,
Are the drooping boughs meanwhile.
While the graceful shrubs in fringe arrayed,
And bugles and lace of the finest grade,
Stand motionless, their charms displayed,
Like youthful maidens dreaming.

Icicles now from the eaves are pending,
And the fences are grated with crystal bars,
While the flashing grove in the maze seems blending
Of silver, and gold, and light contending
With glittering shafts, their rays outsending
Like a myriad fallen stars ;
And the loud, harsh note of the saucy jay
In his shrill, discordant roundelay

Is the only sound that comes to-day
From the grove's still bowers wending.

Out in the barn-yard kine are lowing
And locking horns in half-playful mood,
And the champion barn-fowl loudly crowing,
With pompous vanity o'erflowing,
Struts back and forth advice bestowing
On all the barn-yard brood ;
And in the door-yard now there sing
Meek little snow-birds twittering
In whispers soft of the far-off spring
And the seeds in the wild flowers growing.

From a great-trunked oak, all branchless standing—
Standing dead where it sprung and grew,—
Like a wooden Memnon, a knoll commanding,
Or a watch-tower reared near an unsafe landing
To warn of shoals or the chance of stranding,
Comes the idol's voice in a long tattoo ;
'T is a woodpecker tapping the sounding wood !
In his cutaway coat and crimson hood
Drumming for meat, and a home so good
In the old oak's heart demanding.

THE HUMMING-BIRD.

RARE little bird of the bower !
Bird of the musical wing,
While hiding thy head in some flower
Softly thy green pinions sing—

Sing like the harp of Æolus,
Hum out each murmuring note
With a charm having power to control us
As we watch thee suspended afloat.

Sweet little cloud of vibration !
Bright little feathery fay !
Wee rainbow-hued animation,
Humming the long hours away !

Sipping the dew from the blue-bells,
Culling the sweets from the rose,
Whose heart, pearly-pink, like the sea-shell's,
Yields purest ambrosia that grows.

Hid from the dull sight of mortals,
Out of the reach of the bee,
Down through the lily's white portals
Nectar 's distilling for thee.


Now at the thistle's red tassel
Probing with needle-like bill,
Drinking a sweet dreamy wassail,
Humming thy melody still.

In the bright region of blossoms
Where the gay butterfly flaunts,
Where Nature her beauty unbosoms,
These are thy favorite haunts.

Where the wild honey-bee hovers
In the perfume-laden air,
Whither stray light-hearted lovers,
Often they meet with thee there.

Always thou dwellest 'mid beauty,
Bird of melodious wing,
To seek it 's thy life's only duty,
And bask in perpetual spring.


MORNING-GLORIES.

REETING the morning,
Many-tinted, fairy bells,
Upturning now to catch the sparkling dew,
From cool air distilling,
Descending quite willing,
Fair flow'rs to add fresh beauty unto you.
Frailly-moulded blossom bells,
Greeting day's dawning.

Pure is the pleasure,
Sweet and voiceless elfin bells,
Which you must aye inspire while you remain.
So fair is the greeting
Of day with you meeting
That we would have each morning come again.
Silent chime of matin bells,
Fair floral treasure.

Fleeting your beauty,
Pink and purple flower bells,
While clinging to your parent stem of green,
A few hours of morning
Conclude your adorning,
When you fold yourselves more, never to be seen.
O rare, rainbow-tinted bells,
Thus ends your duty !

INDIAN SUMMER.

VER the wide-rolling prairie,
Reaching horizon's lee,
Rests the thick haze-mist so airy,
And yet so dense as to be
Like to a far-stretching sea.

Sweeping the blue smoky billows,
Far, far away roams the eye,
Resting where poplars and willows
Golden-robed tower on high,
Round island homes in the sky,—

Homes that afar seem surrounded
On the high swells where they stand,
By an uncertain, unsounded
Flood that has crept o'er the land
Leaving no well-defined strand ;


But filling up glens and valleys,
Resting on all the low grounds,
Flowing away the haze rallies,
Islanding hill-tops and mounds,
Marking their marginal bounds.

Here and there unsubmerged ridges,
Arched o'er the dim surface, sweep,
Isle to isle linking, like bridges
Spanning the straits of the deep,
Where the light tides onward creep.

Out of the hazy flood, lifting
Billowy sails to the breeze,
In stately majesty drifting,
Cloud-ships come floating o'er these
Dim, dreamy, isle-dotted seas,—

Ships of no kingdom or nation,
Claiming no country or clime,
Part of the fleet of creation
Built in the morning of time
For Nature's packet air line.

BIRDS OF SPRING.

ING on, ye warblers ! sweetly sing
I love to hear your joyous notes,
And see you flit on gladsome wing
As lightly as the perfume floats
From off the scented rose.

Ye seem forever glad and gay,
And happy always and content ;
From blushing morn till close of day
Your tide of joy is never spent,
But ever blithesome flows.

Ye merry songsters, tell me this—
'T is all a weary heart might ask,—
Whence is the source of all your bliss ?
The power that bids you ever bask
In joyous, tuneful mood ?

Or is it only lack of care,
Or the sweet task, all self-imposed,
Of ev'ry chirping, twit'ring pair,
To build their nests by twigs inclosed,
And rear their darling brood ?

The answer comes—a thrilling strain :—

“ Our *very nature* is to sing
And warble for the vernal train ,
We are the choristers of Spring ! ”

BEAUTIFUL DEW-DROPS.

BEAUTIFUL dew-drops !
Ye cling to the grass-tops
As clear and bright
As beads of light.

Witching bewilderment of sight !
O sweet enchanting scene !
Beneath the pale reflecting moon
The meadows seem with diamonds strewn,
Refulgent 'neath night's dreamy noon
Ye cast your glittering sheen.

The earth seems wrapped in silent sleep,
Her myriad viewless elfins weep,
And these their tears that downward creep
Along the drooping grass ;


A sea of little crystal lens !
Like fireflies glimmering o'er the fens
The shimmering moonbeam backward bends
From drops of liquid glass.

Pure priceless jewels of the night !
Whether pale Luna's silvery light,
Like tiny meteors in flight,
Flash from your beaming face ;
Or whether lingering into day,
The sun's first glancing golden ray
Flies off your cheeks like gilded spray
And adds a richer grace,—

Ye are the loveliest gems of earth ;
For beauty, purity, and worth
All contribute to give you birth ;
And charming while you stay,
All nature greets you as a friend,
While blooming flowers their leaves extend,
And meeting thus your beauties blend
As fair as rosy May.

The morning-glory, opening wide
Her bell-shaped petal, woos inside
Your glistening pearls, that you may hide
 Screened from the heat of day ;
There, folded fondly to her breast,
Abode of purity and rest,
Absorbed in beauty and caressed,
 Ye sweetly pass away.

THE MORNING WALK.

Y heart feels glad ! my soul expands
With joyful thoughts all sorrow scorning,
Then farewell, Care ! here let us part ;
I 'll turn thee homeless from my heart
This bright May morning.

The balmy air is fresh and sweet ;
The dew-drops to the grass are clinging ;
The rosy morn is bright and clear,
Her lord, the King of Day, is near ;
The birds are singing.

The bonnie Thrush, perched on a twig,
His blithest, sweetest notes carolling ;
Now low his song, and now elate,
As though to cheer his silent mate,
Her heart consoling.

The modest Robin greets the dawn,
His breast the purple east outvying ;
He may not peer the Thrush in song,
The breezes bear his strain along—
“ There ’s naught like trying.”

Down by the brooklet’s willowy brink
The babbling Bob-o’-link is flinging
His crazy, joyous notes along,
Borne on a fluttering flood of song,
Still madly singing.


The silly Redwing, in his zeal
To guard his nest hid ’mong the grasses,
Starts up and scolds, and darts about,
And thinks he puts each thing to rout
That near it passes.

On rolling swells, in distant fields,
The strutting prairie cocks are “ booming ; ”
The leaves are opening on the trees,
And ’mong the grass, as fresh as these,
Violets are blooming.

Who could feel lonely, sad, or drear,
While in his ear sweet sounds are chiming,
While Nature wears a look of cheer,
And Sol's broad disk just 'gins 'pear,
Slow upward climbing ?

NATURE'S TEACHING.

AN AUTUMN IDYL.

'  EATH a shady weeping-willow,
Side-by-side
Sat a young man and a maiden,
And the golden Autumn laden
With its fruitage ripe and mellow
Glowed in tints of red and yellow,
Far and wide.

Waving o'er them pendent, swinging
From above,
Hung the willow's boughs, like streaming
Whipcords fringed with gold, and gleaming ;
While an oriole, perched clinging
To the topmost twig, was singing
Notes of love.

Forest trees all crimson-tinted,
Here and there
Stood aloft in purpling glory ;
Each one's gorgeous upper story
In the soft, warm sunlight glinted,
And bright colors seemed imprinted
Everywhere.

Just in front, a clear rill, dancing,
Moved along;
And upon its waters riding,
Gently sailing, forward gliding,
Fallen leaves came onward glancing,
Onward, onward, one advancing
Endless throng.

And they watched the rill and noted
 It was true,
 As the leaves passed by them ever
 Hastening on toward the river,
 Nearly all in couples floated—
 Side-by-side as though devoted,—
 Two and two.

Then there came down past them sailing
 On a chip,
Two bright butterflies, with glowing
Velvet wings, for jib-sails flowing,
While a sprig of moss hung, trailing,
For a rudder thus availing
 Their quaint ship.

Pretty couple ! bound together
 Down the stream !
And no matter whither leading,
Still they kept its course unheeding,
Till, perhaps, some stress of weather
Cut their voyage off forever
 Like a dream.

Still the oriole kept singing,
 Though sedate,
Till at length a lone one, flying,
Heard the music of his sighing
And came near ; when upward springing
Off he sped to southward winging
 With his mate.

Though the lovers scarce had spoken,
 They had grown
Much intent on Nature's teaching ;
'T was the most impressive preaching,
Showing by full many a token
How in pairs the world goes yoken—
 Not alone.

Then, while still they lingered seated,
 Once again,
While the evening shades were falling,
And the whippoorwills were calling
That old question was repeated,
And an owl the answer greeted
 With " Amen ! "

AT SEA—A SONG.

ROCKED on the bosom of ocean,
Fondled and gently caressed
By the sea, in its heaving emotion,
Like a babe on its mother's pure breast.

Softly the twilight steals o'er us,
Stars dimly twinkle above,
And quiet has come to restore us
To thoughts of the dear ones we love.

Over the bow of our bark now,
Just rising, the silvery Moon
Marks a mystical track through the dark now,
Where the waters with spangles are strewn.

O'er this bright pathway far roaming,
My thoughts go in search after thee,
My Love, and thy spirit seems coming
To greet me to-night on the sea.

Out from the calm and the stillness
Whispers seem wafted from thee ;
Like the blessing of health after illness,
They soothe me to-night on the sea.

Loved and lost, never more shall I meet you,
Till wrecked on old Time's stormy lee ;
Yet bide near me still, I entreat you,
Till my voyage is done on life's sea.

MOONLIGHT.

1870.



WITCHING moonlight! chosen light of Love!

'T is thy sweet smile that lures the maiden forth
To wander with her lover, arm-in-arm,
Through shad'wy grove, or by the lonely rock,
Or murmuring stream.

Thy filmy veil, enveloping the earth,
Hides all its sterner features from the view ;
Peoples each nook and glen with shadowy shapes ;
Curtains each tree and shrub with silvery gauze ;
Forming a thousand wild, enchanting bowers ;
Transforming earth into a land of dreams.

Thy halo gifts all nature with a voice !
The sighing, whispering trees, each dew-gemmed leaf,
Each waving blade of grass, e'en silent stones
Seem eloquent ; and in their varied tongues
In mutest whisperings speak of love.

Thy fav'ring ray, seen glim'ring from afar,
Calls Cupid from the hazy realms of space,
And hies him to the earth in Love's campaign
Armed and equipped : his bow, a tempered moonbeam ;
His arrows, love-tipt shafts of quiv'ring light.
Sweet woe and blissful torture seize all hearts
That brave his power or tempt his matchless skill.
Thy light is all for Love, and Love alone ;
Hatred and Vice shrink from thy gaze abashed,
While weazen-faced Cupidity forgets himself,
And Avarice is bartered off for Love.

Thou wert not present when the Evil One
Crept, like a serpent, into Paradise,
To lure our parents forth in sin and shame,
And heap calamity on all their kin.

But thou art leaving us ; farewell, farewell !
Thy author sinks below the western hills,
The length'ning shadows chase thee o'er the lea,
The frown of darkness clouds the brow of earth,
And all again is stern reality.

MY DESTINY'S STAR.

1871.

DARK and drear is the night,
But my heart is as light
As the ruffles of Aurora's bar ;
For my steed knows the road
Oft before he has trode,
And a light in the window 's my star.

Across meadow and field,
Now bereft of their yield,
I can see it now gleaming afar,
For it cleaves the dark night
Like a meteor bright,
And I feel 't is my destiny's star.

The wrecked mariner tost,
When his compass is lost
And his vessel is straining each spar,

Turns his keen, anxious eye
To'ard the cloud-covered sky ;
 He is looking in vain for his star.

But this beacon of mine
Ne'er refuses to shine
 However the elements war ;
The fair keeper is there,
And her unceasing care
 Still keeps fed the bright flame of my star.

Be 't for better or worse,
Prove 't a blessing or curse,
 To my happiness make or to mar,
Yet still on to the end
My course never shall bend,
 I will follow my destiny's star.

THE SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

IS fate we must part, my sweet Mary, good-by !
Let us hope we shall soon meet again ;
'T is the stern voice of duty commands me to hie
Once more to the tent-dotted plain.

For my comrades are waiting my coming, to march
And join in the battle array ;
Where the death-storm is raging and fevered lips parch
I must mingle my might in the fray.

Then sadly, fondly farewell, dear Mary :
Let us hope, only hope for the best ;
Should I fall, all I crave is a tear, Mary,
For him who has gone to his rest.

Thou art weeping, my Mary, forbear, dear, as yet,
Though tears are becoming to thee ;
And how can I chide thee ? I should not forget
Those love-dews are falling for me.

Believe me, dear Mary, should mine be the death
Which is borne in the battle's fierce flame,
Should the death-shot but leave me one lingering breath,
I will shape it to whisper thy name.

Then sadly, fondly farewell, dear Mary !
Let us hope, only hope for the best ;
Should I fall, all I crave is a tear, Mary,
For him who has gone to his rest.

LOVE.



LOVE ! thou only joy of life !
Sweet haven of time's troubled sea !
What balm in all this world of strife,
Save only thee ?

Without thee Hope had naught to give,
And Memory naught on which to dwell ;
Without thee who would care to live
And say farewell ?—

Farewell to every kindly glow
That warms or cheers the troubled heart ;
Farewell to happiness below
And peace, depart !


Farewell to all of good, indeed !
With nothing left but cares and pain,
And wretchedness and hungry greed
And lust of gain.

I would not longer care to stay,
E'en were Potosi's glittering store
Heaped at my feet, should Mammon say
"Love thou no more !"

Of all the scenes my life has known
But few would I live o'er again,
And these are they that Love alone
May truly *ken*.

K I T T Y .

1871.

AIR daughter of our kindly host,
My fondest wish shall ever be
That he on earth who loves thee most
Shall dearest be to thee.

For beauty dwells upon thy cheek,
And looks out from thy beaming eyes ;
Sure, he who wins thee still may speak
Of earthly Paradise.


Bright hopes be thine, and be fulfilled,
And happiness from love distilled ;
And aught beside thou couldst have willed
Be thine thy latest day ;—

Then lying sweetly down to rest,
Thy crowning hope of all be blest,
And Heaven receive thee as a guest,
Thine truly,

JOHN B. KAYE.

IMOGENIA.

A SONNET.

LOWERS fade and green leaves wither
Beauty vanishes away,
Friendships die, and Hope leads whither
If I follow 't will betray.
Only thou art faithful ever,
Only thou wilt leave me never,
Thou my Sweet ! But death can sever
Thy fair presence from my own.
Though by failure each endeavor
Of my life were only known,
Thou wouldst leave me not alone ;
And thy dark eyes on me shining,
And thy fair arms round me twining
Keep me ever from repining.

THE IRISH EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL.

THE ship in the offing is ready for sailing
O'er the stormy Atlantic, to bear me away
From the home of my fathers ; my own beloved Erin,
Farewell ! I shall see thee no more from to-day.

Farewell to the little thatched cot I was born in,
The cot where my father and mother both died,
And I, a poor orphan, was left sad to mourn in,
With no one of kin in the wide world beside.

Oh, a silent farewell to the graves of my kindred !
Green mounds with the beautiful shamrock grown o'er ;
My poor darling mother, how sadly 't would grieve her,
Could she know I was leaving Old Erin's green shore !


Farewell, my sweet Nora ! I 'm sure old Kildoree
A fairer or truer maid never has known ;
Unless fortune deceive me, I 'm sure you 'll believe me,
I soon will send for you, to make you my own.

Oh ! what is the curse that has fallen on Erin ?

For her soil is a home for her children no more ;
Like exiles they wander the wide world all over,
And yet the Green Isle is the land they adore.

It is Anarchy's reign that has driven them from her,
And made them feel strange in the land of their birth ;
The tide of misrule has arisen upon her,
And sent them adrift o'er the face of the earth.

I LOVE THEE STILL.

WEET reminiscence of the past
Those by-gone days shall ever be ;
For wheresoe'er my lot be cast
My thoughts still fondly turn to thee.

There, crowned on Memory's airy throne,
Serenely sweet and purely fair,
Reign till the grave hath claimed its own,
And sleeps my day in silence there.

I can not, will not say "farewell !"
Though parted, we shall meet again
Where *all* may love, where all may dwell
In peace, and Love shall say "Amen."


Oh, think not that my heart is cold !
Oh, do not think I shall forget
Those pleasant scenes, those days of old !
No, no ! they sweetly haunt me yet.

If I have ever done thee wrong,
Or ever caused thee one regret,
Forgive, forgive ! shall be my song,
But oh, I cannot say forget !

Forget ! no, no ! my heart rebels,
My tongue shall not belie my will ;
Within my heart thy image dwells,
And, Darling, oh, I love thee still !

I MISS THEM MUCH TO-DAY.

(MARCH 27, 1881.)

FROM home to-day ! And how my heart does miss
The fond companionship that greets me there,—
The dear wife's smile, the ever-ready kiss
That welcomes "Papa," as around my chair
My little maidens gather, and my boy,
Or form two facing couples on my knees,
And then indulge in childish argument
As t' which loves "Papa " most. I am content
To hold there is no purer, deeper joy—
No sweeter gifts in all the world than these,—
To have my little, loving darlings twine
Their arms about my neck, and unto mine
Press their soft, witching lips, then archly say,
"My Papa !" Oh, I miss them much to-day !

ZENEB-HAMOUM.

AUGUST, 1875.



FROM Alexandria's domes and spires,
Emblazoned in the evening sun,
There flashed a hundred lambent fires.
But sad and saintly, there was one
Who drew no pleasure from the scene,
But seemed unconscious, nor surveyed
The city, all aglow, between,
For constant seemed her gaze to scan
The blue Mediterranean.

The daughter of the Viceroy,
A husband's pride, a brother's joy,
Zeneb-Hamoum, for it was she,
From Ramleh's palace balustrade,
Thus westward looked out on the sea,

And watched a fast-receding sail
Long leagues beyond her beck or hail,
And slowly sinking 'neath the dim
Blue outline of the ocean's rim.

A form the ideal of grace
And beautiful beyond compare,
And *houri* in this world's disguise
But half disguised ; for in her face,
As warm and clear as Egypt's skies,
There seemed transfigured such a fond
Sweet vision of the world beyond
As most it seemed her sphere was there.

Yet in her large and lustrous eyes
Was mirrored forth an aching heart ;
Still from their depths no tear drops start,
But oh ! they looked such sad surprise,
Such yearning almost to despair,
As though her soul lay prisoned there
And longed for freedom to depart
From loneliness too deep to bear.

Her honored husband Ibrahim
Had gone to Europe's western shore,
And now there followed after him
Her much-loved brother, whom before
Had never from her been away
Scarce even from her natal day.
For they were almost of an age,
And in the self-same harem born,
And had from life's bright early morn
Been close companions at their play ;
And often side-by-side had they
Their lessons conned from the same page ;
Together roamed the groves and dells,
And frolicked with their pet gazelles
Beneath the olive's peaceful shade ;
Together had they oft surveyed
The wonders of their native land,
And heard the murmurings of Nile,
And played upon the sea-washed strand.

Thus had it been their wont to while
The happy, careless hours away.

But now 't was past ; and as she gazed
And marked the white sail disappear
That wafted from her that most dear
Companion that her life had known ;
It seemed all use of life had flown ;
And as the sun in glory blazed,
Reclining on his crimson throne
Low in the west, it seemed as though
He was a beacon bright, whose glow
Her brother's ship was luring on,
Like to a white-winged pelican,
To where far, grim Gibraltar waits,
With sentries at her rocky gates
To challenge all who pass the straits
Into the vasty deep beyond.

But soon the white sail sank from view,
And then the princess bowed her head
In silent grief. Her mother drew
Near to her side, and, words of cheer
Directing to the daughter's ear,
Besought her to be comforted ;

Then called her fav'rite slaves to sing
Their sweetest songs, and bade them bring
The soothing harp and tuneful lute,
And call with cunning fingering
The soul of each vibrating string
Forth in such heavenly murmuring
Of melting music as might suit
Their mistress in her drooping mood.

So did they, but 't was all in vain ;
The princess looked not up again,
But motionless remained and mute,
Till died away the latest strain,
When to a fair-haired slave she said :
" Conduct me, Mira, to my bed,
Then leave me, for I fain would rest."

Next morning, when the rising sun
Glanced o'er the mouths of Nile, away
From eastern hills, and, golden-spun,
His slanting beams refracting brake
On placid Mareotis Lake,
The mother bade fair Mira run

Awake the princess ; so she sped
To where the beauteous sleeper lay,
And put aside the snowy folds
Of silken curtains circling hung
About the soft and downy bed,
And looking, saw (as one beholds
In admiration mixed with awe
Some strange phenomenon whose law
Is mystery unfathomèd)
The youthful princess lying there,
Her white hands clasped upon her breast ;
Her sweet face wreathed with glossy hair
Was beautiful, but oh ! so pale
That Mira doubted if 't were best
Disturb the sleeper ; but she flung
The lattice back and, stooping, said :
“ Wake, mistress, wake ! arise and hail
The new-born day ! Your mother sends
Her dearest greeting and commends
Her to your love.” But no reply ;
And Mira, fearing, wondered why
She slept so well ; then touched her cheek

And found it cold ; then sudden dread
Stole o'er her, for full well she knew
The sleeper never more would speak.
Zeneb-Hamoum, the good, the true,
The young, the beautiful, was dead.

* * * * *

The palace of Kasr el-Nil
Is thronged about by those who wait
To join the pageant from the gate ;
For in the palace, beauteous still,
Bedecked with flowers and lain in state,
The body of the princess is ;
And chiefs and nobles gathering
From various parts of Egypt bring
Each one some gift or offering
To the Khedive, in their good-will
And sympathy for him and his.

At length the grand procession moves :
And first the plumed hearse with the corse
By palfreys drawn ; then, as behooves,
The priests came closely following ;

Then numerous societies,
Then civic bands of learned and great,
And dignitaries of the State
In two and two came after these ;
Then came there troops of foot and horse,
Mustached, erect, and uniformed,
All epauletted, plumed, and armed ;
In golden trappings after these
Came four-and-twenty buffaloes,
With lowered heads and shaggy mane
Advancing with the gorgeous train,
In meek submission carrying
Rich store of luscious fruits, and food ;
Then close upon this multitude
Came stately camels twenty-four,
Richly caparisoned and tall,
With heads erect, and laden all
With nuts, and spices, precious oils,
Spikenard and frankincense and myrrh,
All in the memory of her
Who then was but a clod of clay,
To be distributed that day

Among the poor, whose cares and toils
She oft had sought to cheer away.

Arrived at Cairo on the Nile
The cortege halts, the journey's done ;
And in the grand mosque of Rifai
They lay the fair departed one
To rest, and gathered thousands weep,
And some in stress of feeling deep
Sob out aloud, and some do pray,
While many, hungering, are fed,
For charity was made to smile
E'en in the presence of the dead,
The beautiful, the saintly dead.

IN MOURNING.

SEPT., 1881.

DEAD ! and Columbia dons her weeds ;
Dead ! and a nation bows with grief ;
Dead ! and a mighty people speeds
With tribute to its noble chief.

Dead ! at that cabalistic word
Fell sable drapings, loop and fold,
Sustained by myriad walls, and stirred
By breezes warm with autumn's gold.

A nation mourns for one who filled
The highest place in man's estate,
By merit, as her people willed,—
One whom the millions voted great.

Columbia, be comforted !

From sorrow's dust and sable weeds
Time's lustre round thy son shall shed
The halo of his noble deeds.

For coming men his course shall scan,
And mark the steps that made him great,
When lost is sorrow at his fate
In admiration of the man.

Born in a cabin in the wood,
He faced the future strong and grand,
And struggled upward till he stood
The foremost figure in the land.

Dead ! what is death to such as he ?—
A streamlet leading from a pond
Into the all-encircling sea—
The nobler, broader life beyond.

Like Lincoln, kind and free from blame,
By vile assassin hands shot down,
The two shall share the martyr's crown—
An immortality of fame.

EVA.

WITHIN that mystic realm she stood,
Where girlhood all was just behind ;
On either side young womanhood,
And, just ahead, that undefined
Life which doth picture all things good,
And builds large faith on humankind.

The sweets from childhood's joyous days
Were garnered in her happy heart ;
Youth's sunshine like a song of praise
Unto her being did impart
The gladness of its warm caress,
While womanhood's young loveliness
Crowned all with her maturer ways.

But pain, and death, and sorrow came,
And naught is left us but her name,—
Her name and hallowed memory
Of such a life, so pure and free,
So full of love, so clear of blame.

Eva ! the circlet that did clasp
Thy finger as a pledge of love
Death hath ignored ; and the White Dove
Of wedlock hovering above
Thee, bearing orange blossoms rare
To wreath about thy shining hair,
Saw the grim spectre and took fright,
Forgot her errand, and in flight
Dropped the sweet blossoms from her grasp,
Then fluttered back to where she dwells ;
And flowers, brought to crown thy head,
Fell on thy coffin-lid instead,
Changed to a wreath of immortelles.

Instead of fragrant marriage-bell
From flowers wrought, in bud and bloom,
And swung from arch of evergreen
Honeysuckle and eglantine,
And tongued for only bride and groom,
An iron-lipped orator of gloom—
A grim muezzin—tolled thy knell
From steeple height, in throbbing swell,
To summon mourners to thy tomb.

Eve, Eva, Life ! and art thou gone ?
Gone from our midst beyond recall ?
Hast thou forever left us all
Who loved thee here, with naught but grief
To fill the space void by thy death ?
Thy fair young life did seem so brief,
Thy death so sad to think upon,
That sorrow seeking for relief
Would fain believe thou art not gone.

Oh ! is existence but a breath
Exhaled upon the sea of air
Which eddies round us everywhere,
And when 't is cold, an endless pause ?
Or shall that breath, freed from control
Throughout the eons of all time,
Still own the disembodied soul
Which in the flesh did give it force
And action, and in many a clime
Still bear allegiance to its cause ;
In all its ceaseless wandering course,
That life's own music and its rhyme,
And loyal always to its laws ?

And even now thou mayest stand
Upon that mystic, further shore,
And beckon us with wave of hand
To quit our grief and hasten o'er
The stream which flows forevermore
'Twixt this poor life and perfect bliss.
And most we hear thy pleading : " Come !
The touch of angel lips—the kiss
Of pure and perfect welcome—waits
Your entrance at the jasper gates."
And then the low and mighty hum
Of countless mingling voices sing
Approval, and on fancy's wing
We speed away before our time
To join our voices with the chime.

THE BLACK EXILES' LAMENT.

MAY, 1879.



SUNNY South, our eyes rain tears !

Our hearts are bleeding as we go

Out from this only land we know.

What though for twice a hundred years

Our race was doomed to chains and woe

Beneath thy skies ! We blame not thee !

Our fellow-mortals made it so,

And called it our poor "destiny."

We love thee with a sorrowing love !

Our kindred with their tears and toil

Have sanctified, to us, thy soil.

T was here they suffered, prayed, and strove ;

Here are their countless grassy graves,

More cherished in our smitten hearts,
In that they are the beds where slaves
Have laid them down in freedom's sleep.

Now that we go, the tear drop starts :
O pitying heaven ! we can but weep !

Our chains were stricken to the ground,
Our shackles were unlocked, and we
Stepped forth rejoicing, all unbound ;
The law proclaimed our liberty.

We greeted with extended hand
Our masters of the other day ;
We only sought to learn the way
To do our new-born duties well.

We pledged our toil to make this land
To smile and blossom as the rose,
We thought in freedom here to dwell,—
To live in friendship and repose :
But no ; they would not have it thus !

Our one-time masters, now our foes,
Concede not freedom's rights to us ;
They spurn us with a cruel hate,

Mock at our wrongs, and raise their hand
Against us in this summer land.

Oh, this is too unkind a fate !
Fear exiles us ! We rise and flee,
O sunny South, away from thee !

Our fathers came not here from choice !
Torn by the arbitrary hand
Of force from kin and fatherland,
And doomed to servitude ; no voice
Consulted them ; no ray of light
Pierced the impenetrable night
Of bondage which enclosed them round.
They and their seed have tilled this ground
As they were bid, in pain and tears.
After the flight of all these years
Of darkness, and they called us ' free,'
We thought our toil had earned us place,
And that our brothers of the race
We long had served at last would be
Content to let us humbly share,
All undisturbed, the liberty

Born to us of a long despair,
O sunny South, and bide with thee !

'T is persecution spurs us on
To this our westward pilgrimage ;
Hope for us here seems dead and gone,
And with our only heritage—
Our grief, and wrongs, and poverty—
We rise, O sunny South, and flee
From deep injustice, not from thee !


THE CENTENNIAL ARCH.

JULY 4.

1776.

1876.

*****n****

O-DAY fair freedom's arch perfects a span,
The grandest ever granted unto man ;
The most substantial since the world began,
The pride of every true American.

A hundred years ago its curve ascended !
To-day 't is finished, and the first arch bended
Of a grand bridge we hope to see extended
Till all wrong is righted, and all error mended.

To-day it lifts up for a second bow,
More glorious ev'n in peace's triumphal glow

Than that which 'gan a hundred years ago,
And shook the rugged thrones of despots so.

A century since old independence Bell
With iron tongue proclaimed the joyful news,
With startling clangor and vibrating knell,
For anarchy had made the country choose,
And it had chosen ; and the stentor voice
Of that old throbbing bell made known the choice.
Aye, truly ! and the people did rejoice,—
Although they knew the bloody scourge of war,
With poisoned fangs, on desolation's car
Must run a rabid *amuck* through the land,
Applying torch and wielding deadly brand ;
For *Freedom* was their watchword, and afar
Through smoke of strife they saw Columbia's star
Arise, slow soaring through infinity,
And flashing forth the light of liberty,
Till Peace came, ushered in by Victory.

* * * * *

Benignant Peace ! sweet tranquil Peace !
All hail the day when war shall cease

And thou shalt reign alone !
God speed the time when Reason's word
Shall wholly supersede the sword
And armies be unknown !

* * * * *

A century 's past ; dissensions have been curbed,
And Wrong has yielded ; Might has been with Right,
Throughout the world has Slavery been disturbed,
And from Columbia's shore has taken flight
Forevermore.

Fair Liberty 's enthroned
'Mid countless hosts, in joyful triumph now !
Not like the *Christ* through dastard fear disowned,
Nor like the martyred Stephen, scorned and stoned
By perjured bigots whom he still condoned ;
But with immortal laurel round her brow,
And upright seated, while before her bow
The nations of the earth in reverence ;
And that old shattered, bell-shaped relic, whence
Her voice rang forth a hundred years ago,
Is silent now ; indeed it seemed as though,

At that grand time its lip-like metal rim
Gave such loud tones to liberty's sweet hymn
It strained its voice ; and afterward a flaw
Slowly developed which near made it mute.
And now 't is tabled a dumb pensioner—
A relic which the people all salute
With signs of recognition and respect.
Well may imagination recollect—
Hark ! On the whispering winds that deftly stir
The forest leaves, even now we may detect
Its echoes rumbling o'er a hundred years.
And hark again !—the wild tumultuous cheers
Which then went up from that old Quaker town
Back from a century come rolling down
Like the vibrations of a monster drum ;
We hear them, feel them, almost see them come.

And the old starry flag, then first unfurled
O'er the new nation in the same staid town,
To-day floats over the assembled world
Who come to share Columbia's renown
In view of where her liberty had birth.

There gathered from the nations of the earth,
True cosmopolitans, strange peoples meet
In peace and friendship, harboring good-will.
Men of the Orient in kindness greet
Their Western welcomers. A *frater* thrill
Throbs fellow-feeling at the clasp of hands
'Twixt those whose sires were foes at Bunker Hill.
The Frenchman feels at home !—we 'll not forget
The fighting friendship of his La Fayette.
Russe bows to Turk, and Turk *salaams* to Greek ;
Men men salute from many distant lands,
And nod the meaning which they cannot speak
Intel'gibly to unaccustomed ears.
The tawny native of the Eastern *Ind*.
Meets his red namesake of the Western wild,
And sees his wigwam on the cultured sod,
Near where proud architectural Science rears
Her splendid temples towering in the air ;
And the poor savage notes the marvels there
Where once, all undisturbed, his fathers trod,
And Nature in her simple beauty smiled.

Where fluttered but the scalp-lock oriflamb,
Ten thousand flags now flutter in the wind ;
And chief,—the kerchief of our Uncle Sam ;
The same with which he wiped his throbbing brow
At Trenton near a hundred years ago,
(He got warm bagging Hessians there, you know,)
Save that he 's got more *stars* upon it now.

Our Uncle loves the stars, and takes delight
In adding new ones to the constellation
Which he has cornered on his bright bandanna.
May each one added make the rest more bright,
Till altogether they light up the nation
Till fraud shall find no nook wherein to hide,
And bribery no shadows where to 'bide,
Wherever floats the grand, old starry banner !

THE NATION'S REBUKE.

At the Democratic National Convention held in Baltimore, August, 1872, at which Horace Greeley received the nomination for President,—indorsing the action of the Cincinnati Convention,—much dissatisfaction was expressed by a certain class of the Democracy, and a bolt was at once inaugurated. In this side issue it was decided to hold another convention at Louisville, Kentucky. A Mr. Jackson, of Massachusetts, then arose and recommended that they introduce several new “planks” into the Louisville platform, among which were the following :

“*Resolved*, That the pension laws be so amended as to include the soldiers of the late Southern Confederacy.”

“*Resolved*, That the National Flag be so changed as to be acceptable to all sections of our country.”

1872.



HAT ! change the Flag ? the Stars and Stripes
That floated o'er our freedom's birth,
And placed us 'mong the Powers of Earth
One of the mightiest States that be ?

No ! curse the thought ! and curst be he
Who would obscure a single star,
Or introduce a foreign " bar "
Into the flag that made us free !

Thousands have spent their latest breath
And struggled manfully with Death,
To keep unsoiled the Nation's trust !
To let it tarnish in the *dust*
Were *treason* in the first degree.

O, ye who fell at Bunker Hill !
And *ye* who bled on Yorktown plain !
Ye, *too*, who perished on the main
When death-bolts whistled wild and shrill !
Shades of the heroes of Champlain !
Have ye all fallen, and in vain ?
The flag ye battled to maintain,
Shall it be changed at treason's will ?

O, ye who in a later day
Have borne it through the gory flood
When flecked with dying freemen's blood

Spilt to uphold it in the fray
Which swept that cursed blot away !
That inky, ignominious stain !
That child of greed ! that ghoul of gain
Which yielded only woe and pain !
Which only served as hellish food
To agitate this sisterhood
Of mighty States ! O, *ye* I say,
Who snapped the chain of slavery
And set the bonded millions *free* !
What say ye ? Shall this ever be ?


Who dare insult posterity
To even *hint* a mongrel flag,
A treason-tainted scurvy rag
That well might shame his progeny ?
Far better hide his head and die
Alone in dim obscurity,
Than seek for notoriety
Thus steeped in deepest obloquy.
Three times ten million tongues proclaim
Throughout the land his sentence—" *Shame* ! "

Grant universal amnesty !
Grant all their equal liberty
With strictest impartiality !
But pension rebel soldiery,
Or change the Flag ? It *must not* be !

God grant the Nation wisdom's pow'r
To see aright this trying hour !

And our next Ruler,—grant that he
(Or Grant or Greeley) still may be
The people's choice ! God grant him skill
To make our Nation prosper still.

A POEM COMPOSED FOR, AND READ AT, THE CELEBRATION IN CALMAR, JULY 4, 1878.

'  WAS on this day our Nation sprung—
Two and a hundred years ago—
From patriot hearts, which, shocked and stung
By the Oppressor, aimed a blow
Full at his power. Rise or fall,
They threw themselves into the scale ;
They staked their lives, their fortunes, ALL !
To win was Freedom ; death to fail.
They signed the PLEDGE, that deathless scroll
Which there, in Independence Hall,
Gave to our land a Nation's soul.
That was the " WRITING ON THE WALL "
Which thrilled King George with mortal fear ;
Its import was interpreted
Without the aid of sage or seer,
Its language was sublime and clear,
It smote Oppression's dictates dead,
And set up Freedom's in their stead.

A Nation 's born ! Oh, what a thought !
Reaching almost the Infinite
In its broad scope ! A change is wrought
Which moves the world. Recording Fate
Enters the name of the new State—
The place of its nativity—
The circumstance—the day—the date—
Its parentage—and “bond,” or “free,”
Then leaves the rest with the To Be.

Columbia, how is it with thee ?
Part of *thy then* to be is past !
Where has thy bark thus far been cast,
On tranquil or tempestuous sea ?
Thou pointest us to History.
Yes, yes ; we know it has not been
ALL peaceful, quiet, and serene ;
Faction hath shocked thee with its greed ;
Intrigue has harassed thee anon ;
And Slavery, that coiled upon
Thy bosom like an adder, sprang
Toward thy throat with hollow fang

To plant its poison in thy life.
Long, fierce, and cruel was the strife,
But in its midst, when sore in need,
The martyred LINCOLN's clarion call
Throughout this mighty land was heard •
Another " WRITING ON THE WALL "
Was blazoned up where all might see ;
" EMANCIPATION " was the word
It set four million bondsmen free,
And staggered Slavery to its fall.

Thy trials have been great indeed,
And great thy war-won victories,
But greater still than even these
The triumphs of progressive Peace,
Achieved beneath thy fostering flag !
They 've added lustre to thy name
Far more enduring than the fame
That comes of war. Oh, do not lag
Now in the race ! Thy vast domain
Hath of God's bounties manifold
In fruits and fabrics, gold and grain,

And wealth in countless forms untold
To be by man diversified
And wrought or cultured at his will.
Thou hast them upon every side ;
The wide approach is free to all ;
No hindrances of caste, or law,
No vantage-ground for birth or creed,
No place-men privileged to lead ;
In industry and common skill
Thy children have a draft at call
Upon thy *cornucopia*.

Yet seems there trouble still in store,
For Communism's red right hand
Is raised, and it would even brand
Thee with its bloody finger-tips ;
And "Free Love (?)," with polluted lips,
Would hail thee with its loathsome kiss
If thou would'st take it not amiss.
Like moral lepers at thy door,
These monsters threaten and implore.

Columbia ! guard well thy trust !
Be upright, virtuous, and strong !

If once thy locks lie in the dust,
Oh, then beware ! Time moves along !
He will not turn aside nor wait !
He marches with relentless tread ;
Nor heeds he where his footsteps fall,
Nor slacks his pace, nor turns his head,
Even though a fallen Nation call
For mercy,—though a trampled State
Plead like a beggar at the gate.

“THEY ’VE COURTED, THEY MUST BIDE THIS FATE !”
The Grim Onè muses ; that is all.

Look back o’er the historic Past !
The graves of Empires line the way—
The tombs of Nations, in their day
Rich, populous, renowned, and great.
They faltered in the upward course !
They grew corrupt ! they went astray
From righteousness ! From bad to worse
Headlong they rushed, until decay
Had seized their vitals, and at last
The time arrived, the die was cast,

And Revolution's haggard form,
Or rash Rebellion, stepped afront
With fatal fury ; or the storm
Broke with a flood of alien foes,
With sabres drawn, and lances set,
And fixed and glittering bayonet.
The weaklings could not stand the brunt,
And thus they perished of their woes.

O Starry Flag ! thou art our pride—
The chosen ensign of the free !
More than one hero has been proud
To know, that even while he died,
Thy folds have formed his glorious shroud
And raiment for Eternity.
But may the dark day ne'er appear
That mortal man be called to see
Thee drooping o'er Columbia's bier.

O fair Columbia ! we kneel !
We pray a happier lot for thee !
Within our heart of hearts we feel
Thou hast a grander destiny.

We know that at thy first appeal,
Should danger threaten from without,
A million men would spring to arms
To guard, and compass thee about
With serried ranks of bristling steel,—
Here is no cause for fear or doubt ;
DOMESTIC are thy chief alarms.

O Guardians of our Nation's weal !
O Citizens and Freemen all !
Maintain the Right with earnest zeal !
Be true to Duty's sacred cause !
Obey you God's and country's laws !
Pay decent heed to Honor's call !
Keep warm the patriotic fires
Enkindled by your valiant sires !
Let knowledge everywhere be sown
And nurtured till the fruit be grown !
The people prudent, learned, and free,
The government secure will be,
And fixed in perpetuity.

ON THE CLOSING OF THE CENTENNIAL
EXPOSITION, 1876.

THE fair is closed ! The spacious stalls,
Where millions thronged with loit'ring tread
And quest'ning eye, are silent—dead.
The world has met and banqueted
In freedom-consecrated halls,
Where on the generous board was spread
Food for the eye, the heart, the soul.
From East and West, from either pole,
Art, in her panniers had brought
The best her votaries had wrought ;
And Science to the feast had given
Her choicest tit-bits raised with leaven
Which with the elements had striven
And overcome.

Labor had sent
From every stretching continent,
And from the isles, her rarest stores

Of fairest fruits. Antiquity
From out the by-gone centuries
Ushered her daintiest mysteries
To glad the feast. The boundless Sea,
Clasping her arms about the shores
Of ev'ry land, from coral isles
Lapped by perpetual waves,
And moaning strand, and spongy caves
Of silent depth, her fruitage brought
And offered there.

The Earth and Air
Their native products, like the smiles
Of bounteous Nature's plenitude,
Upon the festal tables strewed,
And gath'ring millions, wondering fed
Upon such viands as they sought.
But now 't is past ! The guests are gone !
Columbia proudly smiled to see
Her hundredth anniversary
So fitly celebrated,—smiled
As hopeful as the favored child
She truly is ; and childlike, now

That it is past, she wonders how
The next will be : “ *Shall I live on*
To span another century
In freedom and prosperity ? ”
The loyal answer follows, “ YES ! ”
And though we know 't is but a guess
We fondly hope it so may be.

BEDECK THEIR GRAVES.

(A Decoration-Day Poem.)

HONOR the dead who for their country's weal
Laid down their lives upon the battle-field !
Honor the heroes who were called to yield
Existence to a ghastlier force than steel
In foeman's hand, or hurtling iron, or lead,—
Who faced the spectral conqueror, unarmed,
And sick and weak, in loathsome prison-pen,
And camp and hospital ! To all these men
Pay homage ! let their memory be embalmed
In kindly feeling for Columbia's sake !
Remember that the offerings we make
Are to our Nation's own, her honored dead—
Bedeck their graves !

Bedeck their graves, in country hamlets made,
Near busy cities, and near ocean's strand,
In silent fields, and lonely forest glade ;
Where tens of thousands are laid side by side

Like a dead army, buried in platoons,
And where the solitary trooper died,
And stained the earth heaped o'er him with his wounds ;
Beneath the shadow of the northern pine,
Where sings the nightingale to cheer the soul,
And where th' magnolia's blooming boughs enshrine
The hang-nest of the brilliant oriole,—
Where'er their mortal bodies may be laid,
Throughout the length and breadth of this great land,—
Bedeck their graves ! And though no human hand
May know, to cast a flower, where some sleep,
Yet may sweet Nature weave the emerald sod
Above their dust, and rear the golden-rod,
Or cause the blue-eyed violets to peep
Out from the sheltering mould ; and so may God
Bedeck their graves.

Here, where some grizzled warrior lies at rest,
Cast a bright anchor, wrought of evergreen,
And gem'd with full-blown roses : He had seen
The good and ill of life ; and near its close
He threw *his* 'twixt his country and her foes,

And losing, still he won. Place o'er his breast
Hope's emblem, fashioned from her chosen types.
There, where a youthful patriot calmly sleeps,
Place reverently a May-flower coronet,
And decorate for him the Stars and Stripes,
His country's flag : That not a star should set
In its blue field, and no stripe be unbound,
He laid young life, with all its promise, down.
The mound o'er which yon drooping willow weeps
Hath been bedewed with many a human tear !
Lay now a pure-white floral chaplet there ;
A soldier-lover, he who sleeps below—
True heart in love or war, a volunteer,
Who went, as love and duty bade him go,
And love brought back his lifeless body here.
And thus, with floral anchor, crown, or wreath,
In memory of these who sleep beneath,
Bedeck their graves !

Raise here a blooming cross wreathed with a crown
Of blossomed laurel ; symbols of the toil,
The sufferings, and fruition of renown,

That Death and Time are powerless to foil.
Nay ! Time shall even 'nul the work of Death,
And build anew, when Death smites with decay !
Devotion dies not with a passing breath,
And Patriotism shall be crowned away !—
For lovely women that are yet to be
Shall cull sweet flowers that are yet to bloom,
And decorate these graves as reverently
As you do now, when we are in the tomb.
And say ! what fitter tribute can be paid
To Valor, quenched in death for Liberty,
Than that these daintiest forms of loveliness,
In all the colors of the bow arrayed,
And yielding sweetest perfumes, should be laid
Upon its grave ?—placed there like a caress
By some fair woman ? Naught that heroes know !
It always has been, always will be so !

Bedeck their graves !

Strew flowers over all our heroes dead,
Even till the mounds above them shall be hid
Beneath their mingling loveliness ! Aye, spread

Over each grave a matchless coverlid
Of Nature's unsurpassed, sweet handiwork,
Till each mound seem a blooming pyramid
More wonderful than Cheops--there doth lurk
More real glory in one flower, alone,
Placed o'er one's grave by some kind, loving hand,
Than that whole mighty monument of stone,
With all its age and mystery can command.

Bedeck their graves !

Bedeck their graves ! Columbia's tried and true,
With pinks, and marigolds, and asphodel ;
And if some " Lost-Cause " heroes sleep here too,
Strew flowers above their mouldering dust as well ;
For surely they were gallant foes, and brave ;
They erred, they fell, the cause they loved was lost ;
Their stern devotion had not power to save
The wrong espoused. They paid the bitter cost.
The flag they loved in youth unfurls to-day
O'er all alike, as falls God's christening dew.
In Charity for those who wore the Gray,
In Love for those who wore the Nation's Blue,

Bedeck their graves !

“DOWN BRAKES !”

THE night was dark, a lurid gleam
Lit up the trailing cloud of smoke,
And whirling sparks and 'scaping steam,
Which from the black-mouthed engine broke
In fleecy masses murky-gray,
As rolling o'er the iron way
The heavy freight train, like a flood,
Swept down the steep grade nearing Rudd.

“Down brakes !” the iron-lunged monster screamed,
“Down brakes !” and starting to his feet,
While hot sparks fall like burning sleet,
The brakeman quick his lantern takes,
And mounting to the frosty deck
Of the first car, turns on the brakes
The downward thundering train to check,
While the long smoky banner streamed
About him, and the fire-box's glare
Broke fitful on the wintry air.

“Down brakes!” and hast’ning to’ard the rear
He leaps each moving chasm that yawned,
Like gaping death ’twixt car and car,
And musing as he onward strode
He mutely thanked his lucky star,
Which thus far brought him safe and clear,
For he had planned to leave the road,
And this was his last run,
And ere another morning dawned,
As promised to his mother dear,
His breaking would be done.

“Down brakes!” the iron cyclop shrieked,
His one great eye’s malignant gleam
Darting ahead a ruddy beam,
While throbbing jets of vapor reeked
Along his palpitating sides,
As on a trestle bridge he glides,—
A bridge with crossbeams overhead.

“Down brakes!” The brakeman deftly mounts
The tall deck of a “foreign” car—
A crushing blow! his lucky star

Sank like a falling meteor.
Ah ! surely he had truly said
'T was his last run ! The man who counts
His chain of life off into links
Oft'times counts truer than he thinks,
Though nothing in his mind forecast
The link he 's counting is the last.

“ Down brakes ! ” He 's silent now, and still,
No more those stentor signal tones
The brakeman's rugged frame shall thrill
With action. On his face, laid prone,
They found him on the car that night,
Beneath the cold and clouded skies,
His lantern on his arm still burning,
But all the glow of life and light
Had faded from the brakeman's eyes,
And crimson streamers of his blood
(Life's offering and Nature's mourning)
Draped the tall car that entered Rudd
An altar and its sacrifice.

THE DRUMMER-BOY'S FATE.

JUST before the great fight on the plains of Marengo,

While Bonaparte's glory was still in full blast,
McDonald was hastening forward to join him,
Marching over the Alps by the great Splügen Pass

While along a steep ledge the tired soldiers were toiling,
Breaking loose from above them, a volume of snow
Came glancing down on them, and catching a drummer-boy,

Bore him down in its course to the gorge far below.

Shocked and dumb were the troops at the fate of their
comrade ;

For dead they supposed him, and mangled and torn ;
When, hark ! from the deep snowy gorge there came
welling

The long roll and tattoo in air upward borne.

Stout, faithful young heart ! 't was the call of a soldier,
And if soldiers could aid him he knew help would
come,

When they thought of their comrade in many a battle,
And heard the wild notes of his soul-stirring drum.

Brave hearts yearned with pity, but help could not reach
him,

And the stern haste of war to find means could not
wait,

And while his *reveille* made echo the glaciers,
They left the brave drummer-boy to his sad fate.

Exhausted and chilled, still he kept up a rat-tat,
Though his heart 'gan to sink and his fingers were
numb,

Still he sent in appeal to the troops far above him—
The fluttering notes of his faithful snare-drum.

Then he sank in the snow, and a film crossed his vision,
And death stole upon him—a dull, sleepy trance ;
His drum it was silent, his heart, too, was muffled,
And soon ceased to beat for the glory of France.

THE HUMAN FACE.

THE human face ! clear index of the mind !
Harp of the soul, where each soft stirring wind,
Sprung fresh from thought, Æolian in play,
Gleams o'er the feature, a prismatic ray
Of life, and change, and beauty, on each line,
When touched aright we plainly trace " Divine."

Let morbid Passion, that concentrated Ate,
Chafe her fierce minions through their prison grate ;
We mark the change, and Fancy peering in
Beholds the scene and hears the fearful din ;
Each growls, or roars, or vents his pent-up spleen
In rending bars or glaring from between.

Hatred, a crouching tiger in his lair !
Vice, cruel more, but timid as a hare !
Envy, a sneaking, whining, craven lynx !
And Jealousy, a monstrous fabled sphinx !
Important, strutting, Vanity, and Pride,
A peacock and his shadow side by side ;
A frightened lamb is trembling, shrinking Fear,

But when at bay a wounded, hostile deer !
There, too, aloof, the gladiator Love,
Brave as a lion, gentle as a dove !

All these, and more, within the bosom dwell,
And subdivide the heart in many a cell
Wherein they lie inactive till the flay
Of fit occasion calls them into play ;
When, as their substance moves within, we trace
Their subtle shadows flitting o'er the face.

The rigid lip, pale, quivering with rage,
Or scornful twitching as with palsied age,
Or smiling sensuous in carnation hue,
Sweet as the honeysuckle gemmed with dew ;
Or cold and cruel, calmly fixed to beat
Sweet Mercy, weeping, from the judgment-seat ;
Or curled, contemptuous scorning to reply
By other means, to Baseness, passing by.

The gleaming eyes that scorn to brook control !
Those bright reflecting windows of the soul
That outward beauty to the mind convey,

And backward flash the intellectual ray
Of quick vivacity ; which speak a thought
Of finer texture than e'er language wrought ;
Defying Babel bounded by no zone,
Their terms throughout the universe are known ;
Now downward cast beneath the drooping lid,
Their lustre by the sweeping lashes hid,
As when the maiden hears her lover's vow
And cannot find her voice to answer how
It is received ; but the truth-speaking eye
Is never at a loss to make reply.
Melting in love, and cold and fierce in hate,
In pain, blank, stony as the ways of fate ;
Now wild, now listless, when the judgment 's flown,
Or Reason tumbles headlong from her throne,
Or when Affection's parting moment nears,
Gleaming in sorrow through a flood of tears.

The scowling brow, firm jaw, and changeful cheek,
Are but the signs by which the passions speak
In rigid terms for good, or yet for ill,
The fixèd purpose of a ruling will ;

A child might read that nothing could involve
Or turn aside that look of firm resolve.

By thought, or will, or passion, thus addressed,
Thus speaks the face, and when it is at rest
It tells a story of another kind.

As yet it has but spoken of the mind ;
Now look again, how plainly you may see
If health be there ; if life's economy
Be running smoothly on without a jar,
Without an ache, or twinge of pain to mar
The perfect working of the great machine ;
No grain of fell disease swedged in between
Its fitting parts ; no scrofuld, to log
Life's crimson stream ; no pestilential clog,
To choke its valves ; no springs of poison swell
On joint or tissue, flooding ev'ry cell ;
But from Life's seat her fibrous engine speeds
The living current through arterial leads,
With strength and power the furthest pulse to mount,
Returning pure to its perpetual fount.
Then, then, behold upon the face arrayed
The lasting charms of perfect health portrayed.

CHICAGO IN ASHES.

OCT. 11, 1871.



QUEEN City of the proud imperial West !
City that was, but is not! thou has sunk
As thou hadst risen ! Greatness is a guest
Will ne'er forsake thee ! Even now when shrunk
By the dread sea of fire which whelmed thee o'er,
Like the mad maelstrom, in its lurid spray—
A flood of flame whose deep, unearthly roar
Shall haunt thy people's hearts their latest day—
Still art thou great. The desolated plain
Where late stood princely marts and gilded halls,
The fox and badger might resume again,
And swallows build among thy crumbled walls.

Unequalled in thy rise, and in thy fall
Outvying Moscow ! Yet no Bonaparte,
With famished legions, threatens, to appal
With deeper gloom the mourning public heart.
Thy stately fabrics faded into smoke !

Great convocation of triumphant art
Dispersed like chaff before the whirlwind's stroke,
While Ruin reigned supreme in every part.
Sad desolation ! church, and court, and home
Mingling promiscuous in grim decay ;
Dilapidation of our modern Rome !
The mighty ruins of a little day ;
But such a day ! What woe, and grief, and tears,
Despair, and death, and ruin, and their train,
With all the evils of a hundred years
Concentred in this space of dread and pain.
Mothers and children, husbands, daughters, wives
Fled terror-stricken as the tonguèd flames
Lapped up their houses ; fled only with their lives ;
Whither they knew not ! and the ready names
Of the dear missing ones were called aloud,
But died to whispers in the mournful din
Of cries and lamentations from the crowd ;
Security was all they sought to win.

Far-famed metrop'lis of the Occident !
What fate has overtaken thee and thine

Is sad to contemplate ; *words* are no vent ;
There should be *grief* and *sorrow* in each line
To trace the feelings of the thrilling heart
While musing on the scenes which greet the eye
Along thy smouldering thoroughfares ; a part
No arbitrary signs or sounds supply.

Thy beggared poor bewail the ruthless stroke
Which left them houseless, homeless refugees !
Thy merchant princes—trade's true hearts of oak—
Are princely beggars ! Yet they stem the seas
Of their misfortune, with that fortitude,
Born of high hope and lofty enterprise,
With which thy sons have ever been imbued.
And thou, and they, like Phoenix, shall arise
Till all thy former grandeur is surpassed,
And thou again be 'mong the foremost classed.

AN ARTFUL TRAMP.

TO THE FARMER'S WIFE:

GOOD evening, ma'am! A mouthful to eat,
If you 'll be so kind, for I 'm sore in need
Of a bite, I am, as sure as you live ;
And you 'll never miss it, ma'am, if you give
A bite to a poor old man. Indeed
I 'll be very thankful. I 'm wellnigh dead
With the hunger, ma'am. I 've been on my feet
Since early this morning looking around
For something to do to earn my bread,
But nothing at all, ma'am, have I found,
But only taunts and scorn instead.

"Another tramp," did you say? A "*tramp!*"
Is the curse of Cain upon my brow?
Does Poverty leave such a hideous stamp
On her proselytes, that jeers and hate
Is their rightful portion? Is this the fate
Of one who would labor if he could

For the merest pittance—a morsel of food
To stay the hunger that gnaws within?
“ANOTHER TRAMP!” Is original sin
Tied up in that title? I begin
To think I ’m an outcast among men,
But have I provoked the wrath of God
That the people spurn me from their doors;
Or shun me, like the Wandering Jew,
As an introduction to the plague?
There ’s an odium, undefined and vague,
In this term of “tramp.” But is it true
That he is a vagrant who implores
To *earn* his bread? Placed under the sod
I ’d be free from these ills perhaps, but then,
Maybe not. Is there peace beyond
The grave for a friendless vagabond
Who vainly pleads for succor here?

“ONLY A TRAMP!” Well, that ’s very near
To the truth for all; I commenced maybe
Some years ago at the country’s call,
For I tramped with Sherman to the sea,

And through the Car'linas up the coast.
I was there when Johnston's gray-clad host
Laid down their arms and the war was done ;
So I 'm but one of Sherman's tramps at most.
What though an ounce of rebel lead—
Lead aimed at the nation's life and mine—
Plowed through my flesh as we charged in line
On the rebel works at Donaldson ?
What though across my grizzled head,
As you see, there 's a bald and ugly scar,
The compliment of a tall " Confed."
With his glancing sabre well laid on
At another fight early in the war ?
What of that ? that 's what I enlisted for
I suppose ; and I soon was well again,
And have not been of the pensioned men.

" ONLY A TRAMP ! " Will they give me a grave
In this glorious land I helped to save ?
Good-by ! What ? Thanks ! God bless you, ma'am !
What a lucky poor old man I am,
Sure enough, for all. An old soldier's prayer

From his wayside couch in the starlight damp
Shall bless your name on the still night air
For the food bestowed on a wretched tramp.


* * * * *

TO HIS CHUMS :

How did I make out ? First-rate ! I played
Old soldier so well that the old girl cried
Like a little child. And at last she made
Me a good warm meal, and then supplied
My scanty purse with a little cash.
And this good old scar, just above my ear,
That I got at a hen-roost raid last year,
At being repulsed by a blow from a spade,
Played a prominent part. Oh, this tramping trade
Requires fine talent. A man who is rash,
Or rude in his speech, will never succeed,
But had better work for his funds and feed.

OLD WINTER'S RELAPSE.

MARCH, 1877.

LD Winter sat and mused awhile, and then he
smiled,

And cynically said : “ ’T is common to deceive,
And fashionable, too, ’mong men, as I believe ;
Long with false words and artifices they ’ve beguiled
The gentler sex ! and, as I learn, have, more or less,
For all the vile deception sown, reapt fair success :
Old Satan, too, thus circumvented Mother Eve.
Now I ’ve concluded that *I’ll* try this rare old plan
Contrived by cunning Satan, and espoused by Man,
And if I fail, I *fail*, not mine the heart to grieve.

“ My predecessors thought it just about the thing,
(Or some of them at least, if poets truly sing)
To feebly hang around until they saw a chance,
In their weak blusterings, to pretend a trance
And drop exhausted in the *lap* of lovely Spring,

Such whimpering knock-kneed nonsense will not *do* for
me,

I 'll have that fair and charming damsel on *my* knee
In my own proper realm, unless deception's power
Shall fail my well-laid plot in the decisive hour."

And so Old Grizzly dissolved his slumbering snows,
Dismissed grim Boreas, and all throughout the land
Induced the warm South Wind, until the early rose
Almost was tempted to put forth her swelling buds,
While the hold hypocrite himself assumed so bland
And mild a cast of countenance, each frozen brook
Broke from chained silence in a stream of bubbling suds,
And dormant creatures, waking, sallied out and took
A Sunny mid-day airing.

Gentle girlish Spring
Came tripping shyly by, the same time wondering
To see the genial, old, mild-mannered Winter there,
And she with modesty and reverential air
(Judging him upright from his aspect and white hair)
Drew near his side, and kindly spake to him, when he,
Before she was aware, drew her upon his knee.

Frightened, bewildered, chagrined, and yet ashamed to
speak,

She pulled his long gray beard, and slapped his sallow
cheek,

Then sprang away and fled, and she's not yet returned ;

Then the old reprobate in frosty anger spurned

His own false blandishments, and fell into a chill,

And raged in passion, while from out his shaggy hair

He shook vast showers of whirling dandruff on the air

And scattered it broadcast with his fierce breath, until

Again with snow the ground was covered everywhere.

BLIND TOM.

1879.

NATURE oft snubs our schools and modes of art !
To this bond-born, ungainly Ethiop,
She has revealed her most seraphic part
With wondrous clearness. All the boundless scope—
The shoreless realm of sound and melody,
Is as an ocean whose vibrating tide
Bears him along in joy, incessantly
Startling sound-ripples out on every side.

All that he hears finds echo in his heart,
And in his heart seems ever to remain,
And he hath power to give it voice again
Even when he will. The gently sighing breeze,
Wafting its whispers 'mong the nodding trees,
The sound of waterfalls, the pattering rain,
The moaning surf that beats on ocean's strand,
The cloud-borne thunder, high o'er sea and land

Rumbling along in awful majesty—
All paint sound-pictures on his addled brain,
So that, to him, the world 's a gallery
Wherein acoustic sketches are displayed,
And unseen limners ply their tuneful trade.
Harmonious strains, and swelling symphonies,
Are works on which he feasts his sightless eyes,
And, viewing, realizes Paradise.

The sweet productions of Beethoven's art,
Of Thalberg's skill, and Schumann's soul and thought,
The thrilling compositions of Mozart,
Gottschalk's "Last Hope,"—all, when once heard, are
wrought
Into his being. O'er the answering keys
The blind, black pianist in ecstacies
Sweeps his wild fingers, and awakes each strain
To make the pictures live and breathe again.

WESTWARD.

1873.

“**W**ESTWARD the course of empire takes its way ! ”
Prophetic speech burst from a soul inspired !

Berkeley, thy words a thousand times each day

Are spoke by Freedom's sons, whom Hope has fired
To deeds of energy, and these toil on
With hopeful hearts toward the setting sun.

You ask, “What seek they in the Occident ?

Why left they homes toward the Orient ?

Why quit they social ties and smiling friends

To roam where stern Privation's self attends ?

What *is* it Hope hath whispered they shall find

Dearer than that which they have left behind ? ”

Undying Hope, the antidote for care,

The mortal enemy for cold Despair,

Speaks, and her glowing words are thus expressed :

“The Star of Progress glimmers in the West !
Go, earnest toilers ! though your work be hard,
The gen’rous soil shall yield you rich reward.”

They seek for *homes*—not such in name alone,
But homes *indeed*, that they may call their own ;
A spot to build, and plant the tree and vine,
And when ’t is done to ponder, “This is mine !
These loamy” acres, like the rolling sea,
Shall yield their bounteous stores to mine and me.”

Though their abodes may be uncouth and rude,
And hid, perhaps, in Nature’s solitude,
Time kindly tempers them unto their lot ;
Love throws a halo round the sacred spot ;
Peace and contentment fill their calm retreat,
And health and vigor make existence sweet.

These are the Nation’s benefactors !—these
From earth’s four quarters crossing stormy seas,
Receive the Nation’s welcome and her soil,
Ye rugged sons of honorable toil,
Your horny hands have left a grand impress
Of blooming fields far in the wilderness.

Your fields of maize and rank cereals grow
Where roam the elk and shaggy buffalo ;—
Where looks the Red Man on in mute dismay
To see his latest foothold swept away,
Aye, swept away, by Nature's stern decree,
The march of Empire and of Energy !

O ye who canker in ignoble ease,
The victims of luxuriance and disease—
Who daily grumble out your worthless lives,
Take heed of how the border farmer thrives !
He earns his bread, and smothers discontent
In waging war on ev'ry element.

STORM AT SEA.

THE air is a whirlwind ! the ocean is foam !
And the shadow of night is abroad on the main ;
O'er the wild, seething chaos the deep thunders roam,
And the lightnings are battling the darkness in vain.
Will peace ever dwell on the waters again ?
How the mad, moaning hurricane hastens away
And ravel the whitecaps to volleys of spray.
Wild terror and tumult ! the spirit of Cain
Seems urging the elements on to the fray ;
While the shouts of revenge and the wailings of pain,
With angry upbraiding and cries of dismay,
Obtrude on the ear in a soul-chilling strain,
Appalling the senses with vivid alarm,
While we' re tossed like a splinter, the sport of the storm.

OUR KATE.

[The events and incidents described in the following poem occurred in Boone County, Iowa, on the night of July 6, 1881, between Boone and Moingona, on the line of the Chicago & Northwestern Railway. The bridge over which the heroine crawled is the long railroad bridge over the Des Moines River, near Moingona. Kate Shelly was then less than 16 years old, having been born in Tipperary, Ireland, Sept. 25, 1865. The Legislature of Iowa, of 1882, voted her a gold medal, and \$200 in money, in recognition of her heroic conduct.]



OUR Kate ! Sound her unsought fame !

Kate Shelly ! 't is a heroine's name !

It shall live !

Who can give

One blossom for her laurel crown—

One echo to her fair renown

Be it done.

Our State on a disc of gold

In honor hath her name enscrolled,

'T was well won !

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While the rain was pouring,
 On that July night—
While the storm was howling
And the black sky scowling
 And the thunder roaring,
 On that July night,
Little Kate stood watching, from her mother's home,
 An engine and its tender
Backing slowly down the iron track,
 To test a bridge,—where leaping,
 Angry, tossing floods where sweeping,
 Surging round the 'butments slender,—
And bring report of its condition back,
Ere the human-freighted East-bound train should come.

Like dark-lantern beams from funnel
Of a black and bell-mouthed tunnel
 Shone the head-light slow receding
 Thro' the dark ;
Then Kate saw the head-light blotted,—
Heard two shivering bell-taps jotted
 On the darkness ; and still heeding,
 Trembling—Hark !

Hear ! the crashing bridge reels falling !
Down the engine and the tender
Plunge, and to the floods surrender
Four strong men—
Drop them into the appalling
Foaming torrent, and their dying,
Pleading calls for help came flying
To Kate then.

“ None else are so near them !
No one else can hear them ! ”

Brave Kate said

“ Mother I should, I must go
Do what I can ! ” and saying so

Kate lit the lantern and started out
Into the darkness, the storm, and the doubt
With her Mother’s “ Heaven bless your brave heart, child.
Go ! do what you can, tho’ the night be wild.”

Off she sped.—

Off till she stood on the water scored bank,
Where the mad torrent before her rushed
Near where the bridge, with its burden sank ;
But two of the voices then where hushed,

And two from the waters called, to thank
The maiden brave,
Who came to save
The luckless men from a watery grave.

“ We ’ve caught hold on these
Overhanging trees ! ”
They said, “ run ! ”
“ Get help ! then back again !
Great God ! the coming train !
Run, girl ! run ! ”

The perilled men, the coming train,
The yawning gap with flood beneath
To swallow all on board in death,
The rumbling thunder, and the rain,
The waters creeping o’er the heath,
Combined to daze the poor girls brain,
But fired her heart to do and dare
For others’ sake. She seized her lamp,
Then bade the two men keep good cheer
Till she returned, and like a deer
Turned bounding back with panting breath

Along the track, past field and swamp
To where the nearest station lay—
Moingona, near a mile away—
Ran leaping ties and cattle guards,
Ran like a sprite. Nothing retards
Her hurrying feet. On past her home
She speeds along, nor does she slack
One whit her gait—
Her race with fate
Upon that dark and slippery track,
Till to the river bridge she's come.
Will she be late ?
She dare not wait !
She starts across : her light blows out,
The darkness now seems doubly black ;
Down on her hands and knees she falls,
She does not hesitate nor doubt,
But o'er the open bridge she crawls
From tie to tie ; a gaping breach
Frowns dark and vacant between each,
And 'neath the turbid waters roll
As black as doom,
Save when the boom

Of thunder-blasts crash in the air,
 Making the solid earth to quake—
 Causing the trembling bridge to shake,
And loos'ning the lightnings awful glare,
 When rain drops glowed like beads of fire,
As for a moment is revealed
 The frothing river swol'n, and dire,
 Howling the tale it had to tell,
Showing its terrors, soon concealed,
 And ready to clasp her if she fell.
But nothing could daunt that maiden soul,
Nothing dislodge her self-control.

 Across ! at last
 The bridge is pass'd !
Up ! to her feet she springs again !
Her hands are torn, her limbs are bruised
 And bleeding, sore, and cramped with pain.
She heeds it not, but presses on,
The weary limbs had not refused
 To do the spirit's bidding yet,
And now the race was nearly won ;

She bravely struggles to the goal,
Throws back Moingona's depot door,
And bleeding, trembling, panting, wet,
Stands till her startling story's told,
And then falls fainting to the floor.

She soon revives !
The train from threatened doom is stayed,
An engine with its rescuing crew,
Accompanied by the fearless maid,
Across that mile of darkness flew
And saved the lives
Of those two men she left there, clinging
To tree tops o'er the wild flood swinging.

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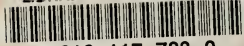
Heroic maiden ! Rare transplanted rose,
Budding so bravely on our western soil !
Green be the clustering wreath that shall enclose
Thy blooming worth in its immortal coil.
In it old Erin's shamrock shall entwine
With our Columbia's laurel, like the strands
Of mingling mosses ; and these deeds of thine
Endear thy name to these, thy kinship lands.











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